

SOURCES OF PROHIBITIONISM

IN IOWA 1878 - 1882

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PREFACE

The temperance movement emerged during the American colonial period when social drinking was elevated to the status of a folkway. Early Americans gleefully consumed quantities of beer, ale, and wine, but, since brew-masters were rare in most of the colonies, the ingenious colonials readily substituted distilled beverages, especially rum concoctions, for the milder liquors. Unfortunately, many did not regulate their ingestion according to the increased potency of the distilled liquors. It was within this framework that early attempts were made to influence Americans to drink temperately.¹ Puritan divine, Increase Mather, in 1673 cautioned against the misuse of liquors when he wrote: "Drink is in itself a good creature of God, and to be received with thankfulness, but the abuse of drink is from Satan; the wine is from God, but the Drunkard is from the Devil."² In accordance with moderate principles exemplified by Mather's statement, colonial legislatures passed statutes regulating the production and sale of alcoholic beverages; however, the popularity of distilled

¹ John Allen Krout, The Origins of Prohibition (New York: Russell and Russell, 1925), pp. 26-70.

² Quoted in Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson, The Puritans (New York: American Book Company, 1938), p. 2.

spirits and all classes continued to increase during the latter half of the eighteenth century.¹

An early crusader for temperance was Dr. Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia. He published in 1784 a pamphlet entitled An Inquiry into the Effects of Spirituous Liquors on the Human Body and Mind in which he cited cases of disease and mental derangement purportedly caused by excessive use of distilled liquors and advocated as a solution the reversion to malt liquors and light wines. Dr. Rush actively crusaded twenty years for voluntary individual abstinence from hard liquors, but, shortly before his death, he admitted that medical and rational arguments were not sufficiently influential in modifying drinking habits and postulated that moral suasion would be more powerful:

From the influence of the Quakers and Methodists in checking this evil, I am disposed to believe that the business must be effected finally by religion alone. Human reason has been employed in vain.²

Churches had been concerned about intemperance for several generations. Increase Mather and his son had preached against intemperance in Puritan New England during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Francis MacKinzie, considered to be the first Presbyterian minister in the British American colonies, delivered sermons against

¹Krout, op. cit., pp. 51-71.

²Quoted in Alice Felt Tyler, Freedom's Ferment (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1961), p. 319.

the evils of liquor as early as 1705. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, condemned the liquor traffic in 1743 and by 1789 had advocated total abstinence. However, church declarations against distilled liquors before 1810 were narrowly aimed at influencing the conduct of their own congregations.¹

The first church as a body to militantly endorse general societal temperance reforms was the Congregational church of New England. Activated by the temperance sermons and organizations of Lyman Beecher, the regional body established committees to investigate and attempt to alleviate general intemperance. The Congregationalists were soon joined by the Presbyterians who in 1812 called upon their ministers to publicly condemn intemperance as a sin and to denounce saloons as public nuisances. By 1825 Methodists, Baptists, and Quakers officially had made similar resolutions.²

Pietistic Protestant declarations and social activities were reinforced by national organizations in the 1820's. The American Society for the Promotion of Temperance, established in 1826 largely through the aid of Christian temperance workers, was a militant association

¹ Ernest H. Cherrington, The Evolution of Prohibition in the United States of America (Montclair, New Jersey: Patterson, Smith, 1920), pp. 65-69.

² Ibid., pp. 69-75.

which combined revivalistic methods and a sophisticated structure to induce individuals to abandon distilled liquors. The American Temperance Society, as it was later called, maintained paid secretaries, sent lecturers through the country, kept up a national press campaign and published pamphlets for two decades. By 1837 it claimed four thousand local affiliates with over one-half million members. During the 1830s the American Temperance Union was organized to coordinate the activities of the American Temperance Society and numerous local and state groups.¹

By the 1830s the pattern of the nineteenth century temperance movement was discernible. Prohibitionism had become a coalition of Protestant evangelical denominations and quasi-religious pressure groups which tended to use rational and moral arguments within revivalistic frameworks to induce and coerce individuals and later the general society into adhering to prohibition.

During the 1830s a number of forces temporarily weakened the temperance crusade. The American Temperance Society and the American Temperance Union were crippled by internal dissension between temperance elements which only wanted distilled liquors banned and total abstinence members who wanted all liquors abolished, including wine, beer, and ale. The strength of organizations was further sapped by

¹Tyler, op. cit., pp. 323-329.

the growing abolitionist movement and economic turmoil after 1837.¹

Prohibition was revived in the 1840s by the Washingtonian movement. Organized by reformed drinkers, the Washington Temperance Society, although not affiliated with specific religious denominations, used revivalistic tactics. Meetings consisted exclusively of speeches by reformed drunks and included such pietistic expressions as "experience meetings," "personal testimony," "salvation," "regeneration," and "missionaries." The society grew rapidly and by 1843 claimed over one-half million members. However, the organization of the society was unstable, and by the mid-1840s, most of the Washingtonians had joined older, established temperance societies.

Despite the brevity of the Washingtonians, their crusade did revive a prohibitionist spirit which inaugurated a series of political movements in numerous states to obtain liquor regulation and prohibition legislation. Several states passed local option laws, and in 1851 the prohibitionists proclaimed their greatest victory when Maine adopted total abstinence. By 1855 Vermont, Rhode Island, the Territory of Minnesota, Michigan, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Tennessee, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan,

¹Krout, op. cit., pp. 156-178.

Iowa, and Wisconsin had adopted similar legislation.¹

The prohibition laws were generally not successful or permanent. In several states the courts declared the laws unconstitutional, or public support waned and the laws were amended or repealed. Before 1860 the general prohibition crusade smothered in the excitement over slavery and the resulting civil war.²

The nineteenth century prohibition syndrome was not totally destroyed by the Civil War. In the 1870s forces which had stimulated and activated prohibitionist workers in the ante-bellum period once again became viable. In 1869 the Prohibition Party was established and ran a presidential candidate in 1872 who received 5,607 votes; however, the party continued to campaign and by 1892 its candidate received 270,710 votes.

The organization most credited with reviving prohibitionism was the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Established in 1874 as the result of a woman's crusade which closed several saloons in the Old Northwest, the union combined a missionary zeal with an efficient organization to establish local chapters in every state in order to coerce

¹ Tyler, op. cit., pp. 347-348.

² Cherrington, op. cit., pp. 144-145; D. Leigh Colvin, Prohibition in the United States (New York: George H. Doran, Company, 1926), p. 40.

local businessmen and governments into adopting prohibition.

During the 1880s a second wave of state prohibition swept through the country resulting in Maine, Kansas, North and South Dakota, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Iowa adopting total abstinence by 1890. Prohibitionists also carried on energetic, but losing, campaigns in twelve other states.¹

The contours of nineteenth century American prohibitionism while reflective of attempts by national reformers to require moderate consumption and later total abstinence of alcoholic beverages was more active and significant at local levels. Most prohibitionist appeals were aimed at individuals and local institutions, and the majority of prohibitionist victories were at county and state levels. Thus, the core and dynamism of the temperance crusade must be investigated on a local scale.

The Iowa campaign during the late 1870s and early 1880s to incorporate a prohibition amendment into the state constitution was ideally reflective of the energies, arguments, and sources of parochial nineteenth century prohibitionism. Evangelical Protestant churches endorsed prohibition legislation and contributed members to local dry associations. Typical of the gross movement, prohibitionist pressure groups, especially the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, were significant in popularizing the cause

¹Cherrington, op. cit., pp. 176-81.

and activating some Iowans to vote for a prohibition amendment and later support prohibitionist legislation. The special prohibition referendum also acted as a catalyst in stimulating temperance and anti-prohibitionist debate as well as revealing the prohibitionist tendencies of socioeconomic regions and ethnic groups. Thus, an analysis of the course of Iowa prohibitionism in the post-bellum period will provide a microcosm of the traditional nineteenth century crusade at the apex of its effectiveness.

CHAPTER I

ORIGINS OF IOWA PROHIBITION

Late in June 1882, Iowa prohibitionist forces intensified their campaign for the adoption of an amendment to the state constitution which would require total abstinence from all alcoholic beverages by everyone in the state. Events on the day of the referendum revealed the emotionalism of both the prohibitionists and their opponents over the issue. Prohibitionists conducted marathon prayer meetings in the Burlington Methodist Church led by different city ministers each hour to pray for the permanent destruction of liquor, while anti-prohibitionists hired German bands to play spirited music through Dubuque streets to get voters out who were sympathetic to their anti-prohibition cause.¹ An organ was installed in the Buena Vista Court House and Woman's Christian Temperance Union members sang temperance songs, distributed tickets and politely solicited votes from citizens. When a voter later complained that he had been intimidated by the presence of aggressive feminine canvassers at the polls, the editor of the Storm Lake Pilot questioned the right of a man to vote if he could be adversely influenced by slight pressure from women.² In the

¹ Dubuque Herald, June 28, 1882.

² Storm Lake Pilot, June 29, 1882.

state capital, ladies formed a skirmish line about a poll with their motto, "God and Our Native Land," displayed boldly behind their queue. Throughout the state middle-class women opened free lunch rooms, decorated with floral messages, inviting enfranchised citizens to "Vote to Redeem Iowa" and declaring "Temperance Forever" and "The Home Against the Saloon." At one lunch room in Des Moines, a man demonstrated his distaste for the politics of the ladies by emptying a pail full of whiskey into their barrel of ice water.¹

The events comprising part of the amendment campaign seemed to climax the striving of over two generations of temperance workers who shared the belief and wonderment of J. Ellen Foster, Superintendent of the Department of Legislation of the Iowa W. C. T. U., who declared at a later convention that she had heard the command to "Stand Still and see the Salvation of God."²

The temperance movement had been initiated while Iowa was governed as part of the Michigan Territory. From 1805 to 1836, twenty-four laws were passed by the Michigan

¹ (Des Moines) Iowa State Register, June 28, 1882 [hereinafter referred to as Register].

² J. Ellen Foster, "Report of Superintendent of Department of Legislation," Tenth Annual Meeting of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Iowa (Cedar Rapids: A. J. Mallahan, Printer and Binder, 1883), p. 41.

Territorial Assembly which restricted intemperance and forbade the sale of alcoholic beverages on Sundays, near churches, or to minors.¹ As a separate territory, the Iowa territorial legislature, at the urging of Fort Madison and Burlington temperance societies and especially under the influence of the first two governors of the territory, continued the temperance trend of controlling and restricting the sale of alcoholic beverages. Large towns were given authority to regulate the liquor trade within their city limits. Saloons were required to pay high license taxes ranging from \$50 to \$100, depending upon the size of the community in which the saloon was located. Furthermore, the sale of spirituous liquids to Indians was forbidden.²

Two months after Iowa attained statehood, the first General Assembly passed a local option law; referendums held in April 1847, resulted in all counties voting to go dry except Keokuk. However, the local option law was not enforced, and was eventually revised once again to allow the sale of alcoholic beverages in establishments which had procured expensive licenses ranging in cost from \$50 to

¹Dan Elbert Clark, "The Beginnings of Liquor Legislation in Iowa," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, V (April, 1907), 193-96.

²Ibid., pp. 196-200.

\$125.¹ Thus, within five years, the two major theories of liquor regulation had been tried: the attempt to prohibit the manufacture, sale and consumption of liquor, and the more moderate attempt to abate intemperance through the regulation of retail outlets.²

The victory of anti-liquor forces in legislating absolute prohibition in Maine revitalized activity in Iowa in 1851. Petitioning and prohibitionist threats to boycott any Whig or Democratic candidates who did not support additional restrictions upon the use of alcoholic beverages resulted in legislation prohibiting the manufacture and sale of all liquor except home-made cider and wine (which could be sold only in quantities in excess of five gallons). In accordance with special provisions attached by legislators neutral on the prohibition issue, the law was submitted to popular referendum on April 2, 1855, and passed by a favorable vote of 25,555, compared with a negative vote of 22,646. Lee county cast the largest majority, while Dubuque voted most strongly against the proposed law. The earlier prohibition experience of the 1840s was repeated, and the

¹Dan Elbert Clark, "The History of Liquor Legislation in Iowa, 1846-1861," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, VI (January, 1908), 56-74.

²In later decades, "high license" was adopted by anti-prohibition forces in the state when the very existence of manufacture and sale of liquor was threatened by powerful and organized abstinence forces.

law was gradually modified, allowing the sale of wine, beer, and cider by 1858.¹ Continued pressure upon the legislature, especially after the Democratic party in its 1859 platform openly condemned the Maine Law and advocated a system of high licenses, caused the reestablishment of local option after 1868. After a county referendum, communities were permitted to issue licenses which would permit the retail sale of wine, beer, and cider; however, whiskey and distilled liquors continued to be illegal in Iowa.²

The local option laws were generally disregarded, especially in cities. A Des Moines referendum in 1869, overwhelmingly supported closing all saloons in the city by a vote of 812 to 277. When the ordinance went into effect on April 14, 1870, Des Moines experienced the driest day in its history. Saloons were closed, or were dispensing soda water and other mild beverages. However, by the 20th of April, two saloon-keepers had successfully evaded the law by opening "Social Clubs" or "Beer Clubs." Within months, fifteen to twenty such clubs were in operation, offering a variety of drinks to any citizen who wished to become a

¹Clark, "The History of Liquor Legislation in Iowa, 1846-1861," op. cit., pp. 70-87.

²Dan Elbert Clark, "The History of Liquor Legislation in Iowa, 1861-1878," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, VI (July, 1908), 339-57.

member.¹ Eventually, city officials surrendered, resumed licensing saloons, and closed the social clubs. Similar "Personal Liberty Clubs" opened in Cedar Rapids after a no-license ordinance went into effect in May 1881. A Cedar Rapids citizen in a letter to the editor of the Dubuque Times described the operation of the clubs:

William Johnson wishes to imbibe from the beer fountain, but cannot purchase the wanted article from the bartender, who refers him to the committee of initiated bummers . . . for the induction into the order of "personal liberty." The question is propounded by one of the qualified officials behind the bar: "Do you wish, in good faith, to become a member of this cherished personal liberty?" and if the response is satisfactory a vote is taken in regard to the admission of the candidate--five members being necessary for a quorum. The candidate then places his signature upon the roll book of the society, and a card of admission is issued by the Secretary entitling the newly made member to all of the benefits and emoluments of the society, together with the immediate dividend of twenty-four glasses of beer as a common stockholder of the concern in consideration of one dollar as initiation fee. The newly made member of the personal liberty society is then expected to walk right up to the bar like a little man and set 'em up to the boys all 'round. . . .²

Prohibition efforts persisted, and drives to completely dry out the state continued. J. Ellen Foster, at the 1878 convention of the Iowa W. C. T. U., proposed a prohibition amendment to the Iowa constitution which would prevent demagogues, "money and political intrigue" from

¹Register, February 21, 1882.

²Quoted in ibid., May 14, 1881.

upsetting the prohibitionist cause.¹ She also postulated that if prohibition were incorporated into the constitution, agitation for and against it would be taken out of partisan politics and a permanent, consistent abstinence policy would replace the erratic, cyclical, legal statements of the previous decades.² Mrs. Foster volunteered that the source of her idea was a "gentleman of Floyd County," probably B. F. Wright, who later took full credit for the authorship of the amendment, and sponsored its endorsement by the Reform Clubs, a men's temperance organization.³ The following year the proposed amendment was endorsed by major prohibition associations, including the State Temperance Alliance. During the 1879 state elections, prohibitionists pressured major political parties and received ambivalent support from the Republican party. The Democrats, although officially favoring temperance, maintained their traditional stand on local option and licensing, while the Greenbackers' position was ambiguous on the amendment question.⁴

During the 1880 session of the Eighteenth General

¹Proceedings of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Iowa [Fourth Convention] (Iowa City: Brant, Katzenmeyer and Armentrout, Printers, 1878), p. 608.

²Ibid.

³Register, February 22, 1881.

⁴William Larrabee, "What Statutory Prohibition did for Iowa after the Constitution was Nullified," newspaper article in Prohibition Scrapbook (compiled by the Iowa Historical Archives, Des Moines, n. d.), II, 8.

Assembly, J. A. Harvey of Polk county introduced a joint resolution in the House which would have prohibited the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. The resolution was slightly modified and sent to the Senate. The Senate amended the House resolution and returned it to the House, where it was readily passed.¹ The joint resolution passed by the General Assembly read as follows:

To add, as section 26 to article I of said constitution the following:

SECTION 26. No person shall manufacture for sale, or sell or keep for sale as a beverage, any intoxicating liquors whatever, including ale, wine and beer.²

According to the Iowa constitution, amendments must be approved by two successive state legislatures and then submitted to the voters for a referendum before qualifying as part of the constitution. However, during the interim between the eighteenth and nineteenth general assemblies there was a debate among prohibitionists--gleefully encouraged by anti-prohibition forces--as to the exact meaning of the amendment.

In February 1882, the editor of the Des Moines Iowa State Register explained the ambiguity of the proposed

¹ J. A. Harvey to Rev. Mr. O. D. Ellett of Marshalltown, n. d., ibid., pp. 88-89.

² Acts and Resolutions passed at the Regular Session of the Eighteenth General Assembly of the State of Iowa (Des Moines: F. M. Mills, State Printer, 1880), p. 215.

amendment when he reported three meanings based upon three different punctuations. One interpretation was based on punctuating the proposed amendment in the following form: "No person shall manufacture for sale; or sell, or keep for sale, as a beverage, any intoxicating liquors whatever, including ale, wine and beer."¹ The insertion of the semicolon after the word "sale" caused the amendment to prohibit both the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. A second interpretation, which potentially prohibited manufacture, was based upon the proposed amendment as it appeared in the published laws: "No person shall manufacture for sale, or sell or keep for sale, as a beverage, any intoxicating liquors, including ale, wine and beer."² The third interpretation was based upon two additional punctuations. The enrolled amendment on file with the Secretary of State had no punctuation except a comma after the word "beverage," while the original manuscript of the amendment as passed by both houses had no punctuation except a comma after the word "ale." The latter two punctuated versions would allow manufacture of alcohol as long as it was not to be sold in the state as a beverage.³ While the punctuations and different meanings appeared to be over-stated, the arguments over the substitutions or omissions of commas and semicolons and

¹Register, February 3, 1882.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

apparent changes in meaning were seriously debated by anti-prohibitionists who dismissed the amendment as too ambiguous for serious consideration and by divergent elements within the prohibitionist camp who attempted to remold the amendment to meet their needs.

Des Moines prohibitionists were one such group which attempted to dictate the meaning of the amendment. Their concern may be directly attributed to a large distillery which Eastern investors planned to build in Des Moines if its operation were exempted from the prohibitions of the proposed amendment.¹ The initial investment of \$250,000, as well as its predicted daily consumption of 8,000 to 10,000 bushels of Iowa corn, definitely interested Des Moines businessmen.²

¹ According to the Sixth Annual Report of the Des Moines Board of Trade compiled by J. P. Bushnell, secretary [Resources and Industries of Des Moines and Polk County, Iowa for the year ending December 31, 1885 (Des Moines: J. P. Bushnell and Company, Publishers, 1886), pp. 41, 71, 39-40], by 1886, the distillery was in full operation in the city. Said to be the largest in the country, it did not consume the predicted 8,000 bushels of Iowa grain daily, but did use about 5,000 bushels of corn per day. Cattle sheds were connected to the alcohol works with a capacity of 5,000 head of cattle to be fed for market. The alcohol works employed 85 men and had a wholesale trade of alcohol in 1885 valued at \$2,947,326. The existence of the distillery produced continuous agitation in Des Moines as the General Assembly tightened prohibition in the state during the 1880s, eventually forcing the plant to close by 1890.

² Register, April 30, 1881; (Des Moines) Iowa State Leader, April 7, 1882 [hereinafter referred to as Leader].

The Iowa State Register led a state campaign among prohibitionist groups to popularize its interpretation of the amendment which would allow manufacture. Leading prohibitionists of Polk county testified before the Des Moines Board of Trade that the intention of the amendment was not to prohibit the manufacture of alcohol.¹ D. R. Lucas in a letter to the Register explained that prohibitionists throughout the state, including J. Ellen Foster who first proposed the amendment at the W. C. T. U. convention in 1878, Dr. B. F. Wright who claimed to originate the idea of the amendment, and J. A. Harvey who introduced the amendment into the Eighteenth General Assembly, originally intended to allow manufacture. Heeding the advice of the Register that the amendment could not pass if it disallowed manufacture, Lucas wrote:

Be not deceived, gentlemen; we may be called fanatics, but we are not fools, who are in favor of this amendment. We do not propose to butt our heads against a stone wall, by an extreme position now when victory is within our grasp.²

Other powerful groups, however, would not overtly endorse the "Des Moines Idea." The State Temperance Alliance in its convention in February 1882, refused endorsement because, although most of its members accepted the plan, a vocal and zealous minority did not. Thus, the

¹Register, May 1, 1881.

²Ibid., May 17, 1881.

issue was dropped rather than becoming a "fire-brand in the convention."¹ Similarly, the Iowa State Bar Association at its Des Moines convention in May 1881, refused to endorse a compromise resolution submitted by Albert Cummins of Des Moines, which would have forbidden the manufacture of alcohol as a beverage for use both in the state and for export, but would have permitted the manufacture of alcohol for uses other than as a beverage.²

Des Moines business interests were successful, however, in influencing the Nineteenth General Assembly to pass a joint resolution which interpreted the proposed amendment as not forbidding the manufacture of intoxicating liquors as long as the alcohol was not sold as a beverage in Iowa, or was shipped out of the state.³

Legislative sanction of the "Des Moines Idea" did not resolve the question of the meaning of the proposed amendment or end criticism of manufacture advocates. Anti-prohibitionist newspapers, especially in counties along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, condemned the Register's interpretation as hypocritical and labeled Des Moines "Distilleryville."⁴ Typical charges were those of the anti-

¹ Ibid., February 21, 1882.

² Ibid., May 12, 1881.

³ Ibid., February 16, 1882.

⁴ Davenport Gazette quoted in Register, February 10, 1882.

amendment Burlington Hawkeye which vividly described Des Moines businessmen growing rich from the suffering of Illinois families destroyed by Des Moines whiskey:

The immense distillery . . . will . . . be running at full capacity with relays of workmen for day and night service. . . . Barrels shall be piled upon barrels; gougers and storekeepers shall throng the streets and increase the population of the capital city. The righteous temperance editor of the Des Moines Register will pat the growing enterprise lovingly upon the back, and will adorn himself with the shekels which flow into his coffers . . . on account of its business, and will encourage the shipping of thousands upon thousands of gallons of Iowa hell-fire into Illinois, where the "poor wife" may be beaten by the drunken husband, where the "little children shall hereafter go cold for want of clothing, and shall go hungry to bed for want of food. . . .¹

Anti-prohibitionists also criticized the endorsement of the Nineteenth General Assembly. They argued that the two legislatures involved in passing the amendment were two separate entities, and the Nineteenth General Assembly could not clarify actions of the former legislative body.²

After the Nineteenth General Assembly passed the proposed amendment, Governor Sherman signed the resolution and called for a referendum to be held on June 27, 1882. The amendment was adopted by a majority of almost thirty thousand.

Soon after the amendment was declared part of the

¹ Burlington Hawkeye, May 18, 1882.

² Ibid., March 31, 1882.

constitution by Governor Sherman, liquor interests in Davenport tested its constitutionality. The brewing firm of Koehler and Lange sued a bartender named James Hill for \$113, the price of beer delivered to him for which he had refused to pay.¹ James Hill's attorney, Peter A. Boyle, rejoined that since the constitution forbade the selling of intoxicating liquids as a beverage, Hill did not have to pay for an illegal transaction.²

The most important argument presented by the attorneys of Koehler and Lange was that the bill must be paid because the amendment had not been passed legally, and, therefore, never had been part of the constitution. To prove their contention, they produced the official journals of the Senate and House of the Eighteenth General Assembly and demonstrated that, according to the journals, the House and Senate had passed resolutions in different forms, invalidating the joint resolution passed by the Nineteenth General Assembly and voted upon by the people.³ The error was found in the Senate Journal, which revealed that the

¹ Bills, Block, Wright, Cummins and Wright (attorneys for Koehler and Lange), "Petition of Koehler & Lange to Supreme Court," in Abstracts and Arguments in the Supreme Court of Iowa, December Term, 1882 (n. p.: n. pub., 1883), p. 6.

² Peter A. Boyle (attorney for Hill), "Answer to Petition," in ibid., pp. 7-8.

³ Bills, Block, Wright, Cummins and Wright, ibid., p. 6.

House joint resolution on March 3, 1880, had been amended.

The resolution had originally read:

No person shall manufacture for sale, or sell or keep for sale, as a beverage, or to be used for such purposes, any intoxicating liquors whatever.¹

Senator Kimball amended the resolution by adding after the word "whatever" the words "including ale, wine and beer."

Senator Woolson moved that the words "for such purpose" be stricken. Thus, the resolution as amended by the Senate read:

No person shall manufacture for sale, or sell or keep for sale, as a beverage, or to be used, any intoxicating liquors whatever, including ale, wine and beer.²

The words "or to be used" were not included in the resolution passed by the House, enrolled, signed by the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, and the Governor, recorded in the Acts and Resolutions of the Eighteenth General Assembly, passed by the Nineteenth General Assembly, or submitted and accepted by the voters. The passage of the amendment was, therefore, irregular, contradicting the constitutional amending procedure as described in Article X of the state constitution.

¹ Journal of the House of Representatives of the Eighteenth General Assembly of the State of Iowa (Des Moines: F. M. Mills, Printer, 1880), pp. 83, 137, 138-39, 202.

² Journal of the Senate of the Eighteenth General Assembly of the State of Iowa (Des Moines: F. M. Mills, Printer, 1880), pp. 205, 251-52, 321.

Judge Walter I. Hayes, of the Scott County District Court, decided in favor of Koehler and Lange. He explained that the constitution had provided for its own amending process, and, since the constitution was the fundamental law of the state, it was essential that amendments be carefully and legally made. Obviously, such care, he concluded, had not been exercised by the General Assembly when the prohibition amendment was passed; therefore, the amendment must be declared void.¹

In December 1882, the Supreme Court of Iowa heard the appeal of the Koehler and Lange v. Hill case. On January 18, the decision was announced in favor of Koehler and Lange. Thus, the amendment was overturned. Chief Justice James G. Day and associate justices James Rothrock, Austin Adams, and William Seevers voted for the majority decision. The major criterion of the decision, as written by Seevers, was that the Eighteenth General Assembly had passed the joint resolution in two different forms.²

In the majority decision, Seevers contended that the only admissible documents for determining how the resolution

¹ Walter I. Hayes, District Judge, "Opinion of Koehler and Lange v. Hill," Abstracts and Arguments, op. cit., pp. 33-35.

² William H. Seevers, "Majority Decision of Koehler and Lange v. Hill," in Reports and Cases in Law and Equity, Determined in the Supreme Court of the State of Iowa (New York: Banks and Brothers, Law Publishers, 1884), LX, 551-55.

had been passed were the Senate and House journals. These journals represented the official record of the proceedings of the General Assembly. Moreover, Article X of the constitution specified that the amendment process be entered in the journals with a roll-call vote recorded. Thus, SeEVERS maintained that it was the duty of the Supreme Court to consider the journals only.¹

Associate Justice Joseph M. Beck wrote a dissenting opinion. He held that to consider only the journals was unwise because they were notoriously inaccurate, representing the work of hurried minor clerks. Instead of the journals, Beck suggested that "public history" such as letters written by legislators to relatives and newspapers, newspaper articles, or public testimony would prove to be more accurate sources of information. The public history, Beck argued, would prove that Senator Woolson had actually moved that the entire phrase "or to be used for such purpose" be stricken.²

Beck also reasoned that the joint resolution as enrolled and eventually deposited with the Secretary of State and recorded in the Acts and Resolutions of the Eighteenth General Assembly was much more accurate, and definitely reflected the desires and the actions of the

¹ Ibid.

² James Beck, "Dissent, Koehler and Lange v. Hill," Iowa Reports, ibid., pp. 569, 572-74.

Eighteenth General Assembly. Emphasizing that since all bills and resolutions in Iowa general assemblies had been enrolled and signed by various assembly officers, the Supreme Court had never required regular acts and resolutions to be recorded in the journals; instead, the court accepted enrollment as satisfactory evidence for the wording of general laws. Conversely, the majority decision insisted that amendments to the constitution were unique and must be passed according to the method prescribed by the constitution.¹ Seevers declared that the constitution did not require enrolling or signing of the proposed amendment, just its recording in the journals.² Beck, on the other hand, argued that the proposed amendment had been submitted to the General Assembly as a joint resolution, and, therefore, should have passed through the channels necessary for all joint resolutions; thus, the enrollment was as valid a legal record of legislative proceedings as the journals.³

Another argument which was thoroughly and ponderously discussed, especially in Beck's dissent from the decision of the Supreme Court not to permit a re-hearing of the case in April 1883, was the contention that the Court did not have the authority to decide whether an amendment to the constitution was constitutional. The question of jurisdiction

¹ Ibid., p. 575.

² Seevers, op. cit., pp. 558-60.

³ Beck, op. cit., pp. 578-80.

reflected both the unique character of the case in determining the constitutionality of what was considered for seven months to be part of the constitution, and the level of emotionalism over the case by the time it was being considered for a re-hearing. The argument did not originate with Beck; it was presented by the pro-amendment attorneys at both the district and Supreme Court levels.¹ While the argument was mentioned by Beck in his original dissent, it dominated his rationale in his re-hearing dissent. The argument was founded upon two premises. One was that popular will was absolute in deciding constitutionality of laws. Beck asserted that vox populi was obviously expressed in the eighteenth and nineteenth general assemblies as well as by the majority of over thirty thousand votes cast for the amendment in the referendum. Thus, the Supreme Court could not overturn the amendment. The other level of his argument was that the Supreme Court had the power to interpret whether (or not) laws were in accordance with the constitution, but it could not question the validity of the constitution itself. Beck predicted that the only possible result of such an interpretation of the actual constitution

¹Hayes, loc. cit.; Seevers, op. cit., p. 568; Beck, op. cit., p. 575.

was chaos and a government not responsive to the wishes of the people.¹

Chief Justice James G. Day wrote the majority decision which rejected a re-hearing of the case. Day agreed with Beck that the constitution represented the wishes of the people, but Day emphasized that the constitution also represented limitations on the power of the people in order to prevent majority oppression of minorities. Thus, a simple demonstration of the peoples' will could not be the sole criterion in determining the validity of attaching amendments to the supreme law of the state. Furthermore, Day contended that a careless amending process would have produced chaos much worse than that foreshadowed in Beck's dissent in that a nebulous and whimsical popular will would destroy the stability of the constitution which was the foundation of organized society.²

The decisions of the Supreme Court received considerable coverage in Iowa newspapers and were a topic of interest to most Iowans. The immediate reaction of anti-prohibitionists to the original decision and the later rejection of a re-hearing was unrestrained joy. The

¹James Beck, "Dissent on re-hearing of Koehler and Lange v. Hill," Iowa Reports, op. cit., pp. 647-704.

²James G. Day, "Majority Opinion on the re-hearing of Koehler and Lange v. Hill," in ibid., pp. 645-46.

Davenport Gazette in bold type across its front page declared: "Vive La Gambrinus! The Supreme Court decided to reinstate the jocund King of Beer!"¹ The German-language Staats Anzeiger featured a double-column rooster crowing in both German and English, "Right Triumphs at last!--There is a God in Israel After All--Daniel's Come to Judgment--The Amendment Null and Void--Hayes' Decision Affirmed--"He Who Laughs Last Laughs Best."² Throughout the spring, anti-prohibitionist editors acclaimed the court decision and defended it against prohibition attacks.³

Prohibitionist reactions to the Supreme Court decision were predictably and emotionally negative. Mrs. J. Ellen Foster in her report to the Tenth Annual Meeting of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa in October recalled:

A year ago we shouted with Miriam, "Sing ye to the Lord for he has triumphed gloriously," but in the midst of our rejoicing we found the enemy still

¹ Reprinted in Register, January 20, 1883.

² Reprinted in ibid.

³ As a result of Beck's decision, critics accused him of being vehemently and myopically in favor of prohibition and the amendment. When his daughter later wrote a memorial to him, she admitted that Beck was in favor of abstinence; however, she quickly defended him from criticism by stating that he consciously worked to overcome his predispositions when deciding cases where they might be a factor. Register, January 21, 1883; "A Tribute to the Memory of Judge J. M. Beck By One Who Knew Him," MS in Iowa Department of History and Archives.

rampant, and even the Ark of the Lord taken.¹

Amendment supporters condemned various groups and individuals for their efforts against the amendment. Prohibitionists suggested that an insidious brewers' conspiracy had infiltrated the upper echelons of government, including the Supreme Court.² Others blamed the governor for not calling a special session of the legislature, suggesting that the Supreme Court would never consider refusing a re-hearing when the General Assembly was meeting. Prohibitionists also blamed themselves for not fighting hard enough when the case was at the district court level. The Iowa State Register condemned the lax prohibitionist organizations for not realizing the danger to the amendment in the Koehler and Lange v. Hill case. "What honest chance," as the Register asked at the time, "did the amendment have between the brewery and the saloon?"³

The Supreme Court, however, bore the brunt of the prohibitionist wrath. The Iowa State Register suggested that the people had been deceived into believing in the innate verity of Supreme Court decisions; in reality, the editor of the Register reminded his readers, judges were men

¹ Tenth Annual Meeting of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Iowa, loc. cit.

² Register, February 7, 1883.

³ Ibid., January 21, 1883.

and could make mistakes.¹ After the court had refused the re-hearing, criticism increased. The Register condemned the judges for being unwise and turning against the will of the people. It alluded to the charge that the judges were in collusion with liquor interests and predicted that the judges would be turned out of office when up for re-election.²

Prohibitionist forces, however, did not feel permanently defeated. J. Ellen Foster described the amendment overturn as "a delay, not a defeat."³ Concurrently, the fervor of the temperance crusade was captured in an expression of an elderly Des Moines woman who devoutly cried soon after the court decision: "God and justice are on our side, and no power on earth will be able to defeat us."⁴ While never again trying to incorporate a prohibition amendment into the state constitution, dry forces continued to influence the Iowa General Assembly into passing additional prohibition laws until the state was legally dry and every manufacturing establishment--including the enormous Des Moines Atlas Distillery--was closed by the end of the decade.

The aborted amendment was significant in that its campaign and referendum revealed the nature, strength, and identity of temperance advocates and opponents. Debates

¹ Ibid., April 24, 1883.

² Register, January 23, 1883.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Leader, January 19, 1883.

over the proposed amendment from 1879 to 1883 clarified the social, political and reformist philosophies of the opposing factions. Moreover, the campaign also forced important religious, political, economic and social groups to declare their position on prohibition, while the referendum disclosed geographic, rural-urban and ethnic characteristics of the prohibitionist forces and their adversaries during the late nineteenth century.

CHAPTER II

ARGUMENT AND COUNTERARGUMENT

The nature of the amendment campaign in the early 1880s forced avid advocates and opponents of prohibition to polarize along recognizable philosophies of post-bellum reformism and conservatism. However, such an ideological schism could not have been unique to Iowa in the 1880s because the essence of the split, the issue of governmental intervention to support the prohibition of alcohol as a beverage, had been advocated by dry forces for three decades. But the proposed amendment which permanently would have incorporated abstinence into the state constitution did tend to add an urgency to the anti-prohibitionist cause and precipitated new facets of debate delineated by conservative and reformist assumptions about the nature of the constitution. Otherwise, the amendment and the rejuvenated crusade it symbolized merely acted as catalysts which stimulated the emergence of fundamental ideological precepts.

Prohibitionist arguments in support of their cause tended to emphasize the damage and chaos liquor ravaged upon individuals, society, and republican government as well as the economic costs of alcohol to the society by increasing crime and pauperism and, thereby, increasing costs to taxpayers. During the debate with liquor interests, the dry forces were also forced to expound philosophies of govern-

mental and societal responsibility for the welfare of citizens both as individuals and as members of society.

The most lurid anti-liquor writings and speeches were characterized by a moralistic condemnation of the personal evils of alcohol which approached ideological proportions. A poem appearing in a sympathetic dry Republican newspaper, the Des Moines Iowa State Register, illustrated the prohibitionist stereotype of the evils of alcohol by portraying a dialogue between two glasses, one filled with wine, the other with water. As the two glasses exchanged stories of their feats, the glass of wine boasted in poesy:

I can tell of banquet, and revel and mirth,
And the proudest and grandest souls on earth
Fell under my touch as though struck by blight.
Where I was King, for I ruled in might.
From the heads of Kings I have torn the crown,
From the height of fame I have hurled men down;
I have blasted many as honored name,
I have taken virtue and given shame;
I have tempted the youth with a sip, a taste,
That has made his future a barren waste.
Far greater than King am I,
Or any army beneath the sky.
I have made the arm of the driver fail,
And sent the train from the iron rail;
I have made good ships go down at sea.
For they said; "Behold how great you be!
Fame, Strength, wealth, genius before yo [sic.]
And your power and might are overall."¹

In other issues of the Iowa State Register, the destruction of youth, motherhood and families was expounded. In one hypothetical case, a "fair and pure" boy lost his

¹ (Des Moines) Iowa State Register, February 19, 1881
[hereinafter referred to as Register].

manliness and bearing with the "first stain of drink on his lips"; his eventual fate was "dying at last like a beast, hating this world, fearing the next, and with even a mother not able to offer more than tears at the last black gate of his ruin and despair."¹ In another case a wife died of a broken heart and her children of starvation because her husband was a drunkard.² B. F. Clarkson, co-editor of the Iowa State Register, related one incident in which a drunkard visited his office and pledged that he would support the amendment in order to save his children:

My prayer is, and my vote shall be cast, to close the saloon before my other boys get into them; and get to drinking, and I know scores and scores of other drinking men who are as anxious as I am to close the saloons before the little boys reach them. I am hopeless. . . . Closing the saloon cannot save me; it will not save many others who drink. . . . But it will keep many boys from learning to drink and from being drunkards. . . .³

Clarkson described the drunkard's reddening cheeks as he added that his vote for the amendment would "give joy to the heart of my poor wife."⁴

Prohibitionist arguments were not limited to emotional appeals, case histories and testimonies of unreformed drunks. Scientific evidence relating the dangers of alcohol was often presented. In a three-day Des Moines debate between F. W. Evans of Fairfield, representing the

¹Ibid., May 14, 1882.

³Ibid., May 21, 1882.

²Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

Constitutional Amendment Society, and the Reverend Mr. C. Compton Burnett from the Trinity Protestant Episcopal Church in Iowa City, representing the State Protective Liquor Dealers Association, Evans charged that all plagues in the world first afflicted the drinkers. He cited the "testimony of seventy of the grandest physicians of the world," 284 physicians of New York, and the overwhelming vote of a world convention of physicians that alcohol was injurious to the body and should not have been used as medicine; moreover, Evans explained that alcohol was responsible for 50 per cent of all insanity cases in Iowa.¹ Evans scoffed at the food content of liquor and recalled that a "Professor Liebeg of Germany" had proved that there was equal nutriment in "as much flour as can be taken up on the point of a knife as there is in eight quarts of Bavarian Beer."²

Critical to the prohibitionist logic for demanding total abstinence of alcoholic beverages rather than mere regulation of its use was the belief that moderate consumption of alcohol was impossible to sustain. J. C. Kendrick from Wapello, Iowa, expressed this belief in a letter to the Burlington Hawkeye in which he postulated that "each glass of intoxicating liquor increases the appetite for it, and to

¹ (Des Moines) Iowa State Leader, June 21, 1881; June 23, 1881 [hereinafter referred to as Leader].

² Ibid., June 23, 1881.

undertake to control that appetite is a fight against the nature of things, and cannot succeed."¹ A fifteen-year-old girl from Buffalo, Iowa, in a letter to the Northwestern News also believed that moderate drinkers inevitably became intemperate drinkers when she described "the moderate drinker, the one that can drink or let it alone; but oh! how often he forgets to let it alone. Perhaps there is one in a hundred who can drink in moderation all his lifetime, and never be drunk. . . ."² Prohibitionists, however, never attempted to prove that moderate drinking led to alcoholism, but accepted the principle as a statement of faith, and apparently expected their audience to believe the premise without questioning its validity.

Prohibitionists exhibited progressive tendencies in their expressed concern about the damaging influences of alcohol upon the general society. By asserting that democratic American institutions required the support of a rational and morally inhibited citizenry, prohibitionists were alarmed by the effects of alcohol upon the conscience and behavior of people who imbibed.

To prohibitionists, high crime rates were symptomatic of a general societal malaise. Of course, drys attributed

¹ Burlington Hawkeye, May 16, 1882 [hereinafter referred to as Hawkeye].

² Reprinted in ibid., May 14, 1882.

most crime to alcoholism. J. A. Harvey, prominent Polk county businessman and state legislator, quoted state judges that one-half to three-fourths of all crime in Iowa directly or indirectly was attributed to intemperance. Judicial estimations varied greatly, yet most charged that alcoholism was a major cause of crime.¹ Judge C. H. Lewis of the Fourth District proposed that two-thirds to three-fourths of crime was caused by alcoholic beverages; Judge McHenry of the Fifth District estimated more than half and probably seven-tenths, while Judge H. C. Henderson of the Eleventh District believed the figure to be three-fourths.²

It was believed that liquor caused high crime rates not only in the general population, but also among Iowa youth. D. R. Lucas, a prominent Des Moines prohibitionist, produced statistics which demonstrated the large number of youthful criminals in Iowa corrective institutions. Of 608 men sent to the penitentiary in 1880 and 1881, 169 were under twenty-one years of age, 242 under twenty-two, and 358 under twenty-five; five of those sent to prison were only

¹Register, May 18, 1882.

²The only state district judge who did not contribute to Harvey's crime expertise testimony was Judge W. I. Hayes of the Seventh District, who later presided over the Koehler and Lange v. Hill case at the district level which overturned the prohibition amendment.

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fifteen. Of course, Lucas attributed the cause of the ruin of these youth to alcohol: "Three-fourths of these boys began their career on account of drunken parents or vicious habits formed by loafing around saloons."² After including 75 per cent of those in the Boys' Reform School at Eldora, the Girls' Reform School at Mitchellville, and the asylum for the mentally deficient at Glenwood, Lucas' figure rose to 573 children who had been ruined by alcohol in the state during the previous two years.³

The claimed relationship between liquor and crime was decried by prohibitionists not only because of the ruined lives reflected, but also because of the costs of high crime rates to Iowa taxpayers. Polk county Sheriff Littleton at a Des Moines prohibition meeting for businessmen produced statistics of arrests which revealed that in the first three months of 1882, intoxication had accounted for 165 arrests, while carrying concealed weapons had accounted for only one, prostitution for six, vagrancy for twenty-eight, assault and disturbing the peace for thirty-five, and larceny for thirty-six. Sheriff Littleton reminded the businessmen that it cost the county twenty-five cents to put a prisoner in jail, twenty-five cents to get him out, and fifty cents a

¹Register, June 8, 1882.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

day to keep him in jail.¹ J. A. Harvey said that 75 per cent of all court cases in the county were attributed to liquor, costing the county \$19,895 each year, while jail expenses accountable to alcohol had cost \$11,000 a year. He added four-fifths of the poor fund, explaining that 80 per cent of all pauperism was caused by intemperance. Harvey concluded that while fines and fees from dram shops brought in \$3,000 each year, the costs to taxpayers of liquor-induced crime and poverty was over \$30,000, for a net loss each year to county taxpayers of \$27,000.²

When proposing economic arguments to support the amendment, prohibitionists were forced, as a practical matter, to counter anti-amendment arguments that the amendment would destroy valuable property and damage the state economy. The Iowa State Register published statistics purporting that liquor losses would be more than compensated by societal economic gains. The liquor interests estimated that industries and grain suppliers would lose almost \$20,000,000, the bulk of which represented losses to brewers, saloonkeepers, and labor, with farmers losing over \$900,000 in markets for their grains and the state government losing almost one-half million dollars in revenue. Amendment forces charged that the liquor interest figures had been inflated. Figuring that brewery and saloon

¹Ibid., April 11, 1882.

²Ibid., May 18, 1882.

property still would be worth at least one-half its pre-prohibition value and that labor associated with the alcoholic trade would be diverted into more useful trade, the prohibitionists estimated liquor interest losses at \$9,400,000. On the other hand, drys speculated that societal economic gains after the destruction of the liquor trade would be impressive:

Half the cost of criminal prosecutions	\$	182,000
Half the cost of keeping criminals		160,000
Half the cost of keeping insane (from drink)		162,000
Saving the money spent for Iowa beer		8,000,000
Saving the money spent for imported beer		8,000,000
Saving of money for wine and whiskey		4,000,000
Total saving by prohibition		\$20,707,000 ¹

Thus, according to amendment advocates, prohibition would result in a net economic gain for the state of \$10,295,000.

Concomitant with dry arguments of the economic benefits of prohibition was the contention that capital invested in the liquor industry would be diverted into socially redeeming enterprises, while consumer expenditures for liquor automatically would be spent on other products once liquor was banned. B. J. Radford of Des Moines argued that every dollar spent in the city for liquor meant some domestic deprivation:

For the home nothing has been supplied by all this expenditure; not a mouthful of food, not an article of clothing, or furniture, to say nothing of books,

¹Ibid., April 15, 1882.

periodicals and pictures. But for the saloons this would have been spent for those things.¹

Ex-congressman James F. Wilson in his Fairfield newspaper, Traer Clipper, suggested the production of milk as an alternate industry for the liquor industries. Wilson proposed that if each of the five thousand men in the Iowa saloon business would turn his attention to dairying, 200,000 additional cows would be milked each day. The revenue from such an action would be over \$11,000,000 each year. The capital shift would also result in increased foreign immigration in order to care for the cows, and more capital loans. Wilson predicted that by becoming honest dairy-dealers, liquor interest could pay for their vineyards, breweries, and saloons within a few months.²

Prohibitionists expressed a reformist tenet which held that property rights were not sacrosanct and were secondary to the value of human life. Utilizing such a progressive assumption it was obvious to amendment advocates that the use of property to manufacture or retail alcoholic beverages would have to be curtailed. C. F. Clarkson expressed such a priority when he wrote:

. . . this loss from public action is the sole strength of the brewers' appeal to fair-minded people. But this is so small a mote when compared with the mountains

¹ Ibid., April 9, 1882.

² Reprinted in ibid., March 5, 1882.

made up by the evils of drink, that it should hardly be put in the balance to weigh against the human life involved on the other side.¹

William E. Miller, Des Moines attorney and former justice of the Iowa Supreme Court, expressed a similar interpretation in answering an anti-prohibitionist speech made in Davenport:

The adoption of the amendment will not have the effect to destroy any property whatever, but simply to stop its use for a purpose that is injurious and detrimental to the best interest of the people of the State, and turn it to other uses that are beneficial.

It is lawful and just that whenever any property or business becomes injurious and dangerous to the health, comfort or well-being of the public it may be destroyed if necessary.²

Prohibitionists also shared with late nineteenth century reformers a desire to cleanse democratic government of perfidious elements which attempted to capture it for their own aggrandizement. However, unlike other reformers who focused upon bossism, corporate power, urban poverty, and unrestricted immigration as fundamental causes of corrupt government, prohibitionists believed the "saloon power" to be the root cause of debased government and considered all other factors to be secondary. James F. Wilson described the saloon system as the locus of all forces defying the "better public sentiment of the country relative to the liquor traffic."³ He depicted the saloons as a tightly-

¹Ibid., April 13, 1882.

²Ibid., June 5, 1882.

³Hawkeye, May 21, 1882.

knit organization which threatened politicians, influenced voters, and intimidated witnesses, grand juries, prosecutors, and judges.¹ Newspapers sympathetic to the prohibition cause also readily reported any harmful influence of alcohol upon Iowa government. For example, when the county auditor in Emmetsburg stole almost \$700, newspaper headlines reported: "Grog must Go" and "Driven to Defalcation by Drink."²

Using a constitutional amendment as well as legislation as vehicles for prohibition required dry forces to justify the intervention of government into an additional realm of citizen affairs. Thus, prohibitionists equated anti-liquor legislation with generally-accepted laws prohibiting adultery, incest, polygamy, brothels, gambling or incest.³ Their arguments for such prohibitions rested both on moral and societal principles. William E. Miller charged that all "civilized nations" legislated statutes which maintained "an idea of morality in harmony with the moral sense of the majority of the people, though they may be contrary to the sense of the individual rights of a few who have no regard for morality."⁴ Although Miller proposed that countering immorality was sufficient cause for legislation,

¹Ibid.

²Register, April 19, 1882.

³Ibid., June 5, 1882.

⁴Ibid.

he emphasized that society had a right to protect itself against the injuries produced by intemperance. Judge W. R. Duffle of the Fourteenth State District Court agreed, explaining that liquor laws protected not only society, but also the afflicted. He reasoned that society had an obligation to protect a man against his own indulgence.¹

To anti-prohibitionist charges that a prohibition amendment was too trivial and undignified to be placed in a constitution, B. J. Radford reflected the dry reformist sentiment when he charged that "undue reverence for constitutions had always stood in the way of reforms. . . ."² Radford contended that constitutions were merely "the people's statute-book," and the majority had the right to put in the book any law they desired. Prohibitionists also answered warnings from wet forces that abstinence legislation would result in a police state. Amendment critics reasoned that passage of prohibition laws would necessitate increasing the state police force, resulting in additional surveillance of citizens and inhibition of rights. Prohibitionists countered by recalling the period after the abstinence law of 1855 in which no additional law-enforcement officers were required. Thus, they predicted that the destruction of saloons would cause a decrease in crime,

¹Ibid., May 18, 1882.

²Ibid., April 9, 1882.

resulting in a reduction of police forces.¹

Despite the intensity of feeling for their cause, prohibitionists seldom resorted to name-calling in their attacks upon the saloon system and the brewers. The strongest admonition of most drys was to describe their opponents' motives as "selfish."² Extremists also claimed that the saloonkeeper abused the prohibition laws "like a dog," and "panders to all the evil passions of the American people."³ However, such harangues were uncommon.

Extreme elements of the anti-prohibitionist camp also resorted to colorful metaphors in describing the dry forces; however, unlike the prohibitionists, such out-bursts were not rare. Mr. A. Magnus, chairman of the Iowa Brewers' Association, at the twenty-third convention of the organization called the prohibitionists "fanatics" and "fools" and described the proposed prohibition amendment as "their legal conundrum; their hermaphrodite [sic] bastard."⁴ Likewise, the Des Moines, German-language newspaper, Staats Anzeiger, after the referendum in June 1882, described underlying prohibitionist motivations as "intolerance, proscription,

¹ Ibid., June 5, 1882.

² Ibid., May 12, 1882.

³ McGregor News reprinted in Register, March 12, 1882.

⁴ Ibid., April 13, 1882.

bigotry, Know-Nothingism, race prejudice, and fanaticism."¹

In attempting to refute prohibitionists claims, anti-prohibitionists utilized practical and scientific arguments in addition to a philosophical rationale resembling traditional late nineteenth century conservative maxims. Anti-amendment forces rejected dry arguments that intoxicating beverages destroyed civilization and poisoned the human body, and quoted evidence from contemporary scientific experts to support their contentions. A. T. Hay, vice-president of the State Anti-Amendment Club of Iowa, in a series of letters to the Burlington Hawkeye defended alcohol against such defamation. Hay reminded the prohibitionists that alcohol had many uses in art, chemistry, and industry and was indispensable for advanced civilization. After a lengthy discussion of its scientific function as a solvent, Mr. Hay concluded:

A nation without alcohol implies a nation without civilization, i.e., barbarism. Therefore, to carry out the insane idea of those weak minded, ignorant, unhappy and uncharitable religious zealots, fostered and encouraged by wily politicians and unprincipled demagogues, claiming to be public guardians and statesmen, will be to retrograde to the condition that we found the American Indian.²

Most scientific arguments claiming the benefits of alcohol originated from a 150-page pamphlet sponsored by the

¹(Des Moines) Staats Anzeiger, June 30, 1882 [hereinafter referred to as Staats Anzeiger].

²Hawkeye, May 24, 1882.

late Governor Andrew of Massachusetts in 1869 and reprinted in the American Brewers' Gazette in 1876 and 1877. Former state senator Hans R. Claussen of Davenport cited the Andrew materials extensively in an article for the State Anti-Amendment Club of Iowa which was printed in several anti-prohibitionist newspapers. Claussen quoted a "Dr. Brinton" who claimed that persons who abstained from alcohol broke down after a number of years, especially if employed in severe intellectual and physical labor. Two testimonials of the effectiveness of alcohol in sustaining life and labor were given. One was that of Prince Bismark whose "immense boldness . . . and his incomparable skill and fertility in mental resources" was attributed to the fact that he ate and drank vast amounts of alcoholic beverages, while another was that of a Venetian named Cornaro who after his fortieth birthday restricted himself daily to only twelve ounces of food and fourteen ounces of wine and yet lived to be ninety-nine.¹

Claussen also claimed that wine and beer when used moderately aided digestion, stimulated capacity for labor, and transmitted healthy nerve reactions to progeny. Quoting from Elements of Physiology and Hygiene by Thomas H. Huxley and William Jay Youman published four years earlier, he

¹Leader, May 17, 1882.

noted that alcohol was classified as an "auxiliary food" which when used extensively would damage health, but when rationally used would activate digestive organs and stimulate the nervous system.¹ Alcohol, along with tea and coffee, when taken in small amounts also "retarded destructive metamorphosis."² To support his contentions that alcohol stimulated, cheered and helped the laborer work harder, Claussen cited freely such authorities as the eighth edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica as well as physicians and chemists in New York, Berlin, and London. To induce an emotional perspective to his argument, he warned that abstinence damaged not only those who were foolish enough not to imbibe, but also their offspring: "There is reason to fear that the offspring of those who abstain entirely from fermented drinks, become in a generation or two enervated in mind and body."³

Thus, the anti-prohibitionist argument was able to shift from a societal defensive to a scientific offensive because of the Andrew pamphlet and similar materials published by national liquor associations. Anti-amendment debaters throughout the state used such conclusions and evidence verbatim. The Reverend Mr. C. Compton Burnett,

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

debating in Des Moines for the State Protective Liquor Dealers Association, extensively used national sources. He cited "Dr. Brinton" that good wine produced no negative reaction and quoted Sir William Gile that alcohol was a prized medicine.¹ Only when prohibitionists used local evidence were the opponents forced to do primary research. After F. W. Evans in the Des Moines debates claimed that 90 per cent of all Iowa insanity was caused by alcohol, Burnett quoted Dr. Mark Rannocy, Superintendent of the Insane Asylum at Mt. Pleasant, that there were numerous direct causes of insanity, with intemperance well below religious excitement, "puerperal conditions," and masturbation as common causes.² Unfortunately, the general result of such contemporary scientific arguments by both anti-prohibitionists and their opponents was merely the exchange of authorities without care for their verification or context.

Defending the saloons was another issue of the anti-prohibitionist campaign to defeat the proposed amendment. Prohibitionists had claimed that saloonkeepers abused prohibition laws and their establishments pandered evil, taught wastefulness and corrupted youth.³ Theodore Guelick, chairman of the State Anti-Amendment Club of Iowa, accused drys

¹Leader, June 22, 1881. ²Ibid., June 23, 1881.

³McGregor News reprinted in the Register, March 12, 1882.

of "ridiculous and atrocious" fictions and claimed that saloons were social institutions patronized by "the bread-winners of society, the merchant, the mechanic, the farmer, the artist, the day-laborer, the professional men" in order to obtain stimulants and learn the news of the day.¹

Guelick also attacked James F. Wilson's charge that the "saloon system" was corrupting the state government. Portraying saloonkeepers as honest, hard-working businessmen, Guelick countered that they had neither the degree of wealth nor the lack of ethics to bribe government officials.²

Brewers also disagreed with prohibitionist contentions that legalized abstinence would reduce crime and pauperism. At the twenty-third convention of the Iowa Brewers' Association, brewers claimed that crime had increased in Maine since state-wide prohibition had been enacted in 1851. Statistics were produced demonstrating that in 1851, only eighty-seven criminals were imprisoned of whom five were convicted of homicide, three of murderous assaults, four of arson and two of rape, while by 1880, criminals imprisoned for murder had increased to twenty-six, or 420 per cent, for arson to nine, or 125 per cent, for murderous assault to seven, or 132 per cent, and for rape to fifteen, or 650 per cent, whereas the total state population

¹Hawkeye, June 6, 1882.

²Ibid., May 21, 1882.

had only increased 12 per cent during the three decades.¹ Anti-prohibitionists concluded that prohibition actually promoted crime in that it degraded the moral sense of a community by encouraging hypocrisy in social and political life.²

Anti-amendment forces were critically concerned that prohibition would damage the Iowa economy. Theodore Guelick claimed that the amendment would destroy \$4,000,000 worth of property invested in breweries and throw out of business or employment thousands of Iowa citizens.³ River-city newspapers accounted the specific damage the amendment would do to the local economies. The Dubuque Telegraph estimated that rent rates would have to be reduced because most saloon operators rented their premises, while the city would lose \$6,000 annually from saloon taxes.⁴ The Burlington Hawkeye claimed that five large breweries in the city would be closed. These breweries were worth more than \$50,000 each and employed over 125 men. Seventeen vineyards which were worth over \$500,000 and purportedly employed hundreds would be economically impaired.⁵

¹Register, April 13, 1882.

²Staats Anzieger, March 3, 1882.

³Leader, May 17, 1882.

⁴Dubuque Telegraph reprinted in Hawkeye, May 18, 1882.

⁵Hawkeye, May 18, 1882.

Besides destroying property, the anti-prohibitionists feared that the amendment would drive Iowa capital into non-restrictive states.¹ Mississippi river towns were especially concerned about Illinois competition. A. T. Hay of Burlington suggested that prohibition had damaged the ability of Iowa river cities to compete with their Illinois neighbors. He contended that prior to the 1851 Iowa prohibition law, Keokuk, Burlington, and Davenport had been equal in economic development and population with their Illinois counterparts, Quincy, Peoria, and Rock Island. However, since prohibition laws had been passed in Iowa, the Illinois cities had grown much more rapidly than the Iowa river cities. By 1882, Quincy was more than three-times the size of Keokuk and Peoria had become the second largest city in Illinois and the largest alcohol-producing district in the world, while Burlington had "neither distillery, machine shop, factory, packing house or elevator."² Anti-temperance forces further charged that since the amendment had been proposed, Iowa had lost valuable liquor establishments. The Burlington Hawkeye estimated that two distilleries and forty breweries had left the state.³

Economic arguments of the anti-prohibitionists also

¹ Council Bluffs Nonpareil reprinted in the Register, May 5, 1881.

² Hawkeye, May 28, 1882.

³ Ibid., May 11, 1882.

were aimed at farmers. They emphasized that the primary expense which consumed farm profit was transportation of grain to markets. Obviously, the anti-amendment forces reasoned, if distilleries, breweries, glucose works, starch factories and other industries were located in Iowa, transportation costs would be reduced and farm income would increase.¹ Appeals to farmers, however, were not as numerous in such anti-prohibitionist newspapers as the Iowa State Leader, the Burlington Hawkeye and the Burlington Gazette as were appeals in such dry newspapers as the Iowa State Register.

Anti-amendment groups opposed the amendment not only because it threatened to destroy their properties, but also because it ran counter to their conservative concept of property rights. The brewers in convention claimed that the amendment would destroy businesses which had grown under legal sanction. They contended that their "sacred rights" were being trampled upon by an insatiable majority.² Likewise, the editor of the Burlington Gazette argued that the amendment would result in "virtual confiscation" without providing for any compensation, and questioned if the amendment did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment by taking

¹ Staats Anzeiger, June 16, 1882.

² Register, April 13, 1882.

property without due process.¹

The rallying phrase of the anti-amendment forces was "personal liberty." To sanctify their cause, anti-prohibitionists cited such august sources of nineteenth century liberalism as John Stuart Mill in contending that prohibition was beyond the boundary which a state could legislate in order to maintain the well being of the society.² They argued that the prime motivation of most immigrants to the United States had been liberty and this right was being inhibited by dry "puritans." Such an argument was expressed in poetic form by Louis Fritz:

Prohibition vs. Liberty

O'er hundred years ago
 That patriots brave and free,
 From tyrants reign of woe,
 Declared their liberty.
 The trumpet's mighty strains
 Shot forth to other strands.
 O'er oceans and o'er plains,
 To praise this land of lands,
 To welcome and invite
 Those on the other shore,
 Who love our freedom's right,
 With room for millions more.

 And ever since that time
 The prohibition "bore"
 All Nature's laws sublime
 Would totally ignore.
 The shackle and chain
 Of law they did invent
 To thus make man abstain,
 And moral wrong prevent.

¹ Burlington Gazette, February 18, 1882.

² Leader, May 17, 1882.

No, No, 'tis but deceit,
 Delusion blank and bare,
 It's but another feat,
 Of tyrants in despair. . . .¹

Liquor forces also found support in and often quoted Thomas Jefferson's preamble to the Declaration of Independence that every man was guaranteed "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," and declared it to be the fundamental law of the country.² Hans R. Claussen expressed the futility of such a restriction upon personal liberty when he wrote that very few drunkards would be saved by the amendment, whereas thousands would lose their natural rights.³ Thus, the restriction of "personal liberty" became the cause célèbre of liquor interests.

Although anti-prohibitionists claimed to be heirs of the early American liberal tradition, they actually personified post-bellum conservatism in that they adhered to laissez-faire as a means of combatting reformist infringements upon the anti-prohibitionists' favored position in the late nineteenth century status quo. The corollaries which the anti-amendment forces attached to their "personal liberty" rally illustrated the conservative tendencies of their ideology.

¹Register, April 13, 1882.

²Hawkeye, March 28, 1882.

³Davenport Gazette reprinted in Register, April 14, 1882.

One of their corollaries was that personal liberty must be protected by restrictions upon majority will. Condemning the prohibitionist argument of vox populi, vox dei as being responsible for ten-thousand times more bloodshed and suffering than the abuse of cider, wine, ale, or beer, A. T. Hay gave as examples of majority oppression the Spanish inquisitions, French massacres, New England persecutions, and Mormon polygamy.¹ He compared the prohibitionists with ante-bellum slave-owners who, under the guise of divine authority, assumed the responsibility for their slaves' consciences, personal liberty, and habits.² He also compared the amendment forces' motivations with those of Charles J. Guiteau who had recently assassinated President Garfield. Contending that Guiteau had acted upon the command of public welfare, Hay concluded:

Don't throw your infamous Guiteau the theologian and moral lecturer at me. He is one of your self-constituted guardians of public weal, that has no respect for sanctity of home, personal liberty, life or conscience. . . .³

Other corollaries of the personal liberty argument emphasized that constitutions and statute books should not be cluttered with amendments and laws adverse to an "Eternal Legislator's" natural order.⁴ This divine plan permitted

¹ Hawkeye, February 2, 1882.

² Ibid., May 17, 1882.

³ Ibid., February 2, 1882.

⁴ Burlington Gazette, June 26, 1882.

(but did not demand) man to employ nature for its good use, so anti-prohibitionists questioned the validity of passing human laws to force humanity to use a substance for good purposes when a diety had not demanded such use. The position also maintained that prohibition was outside the realm of legislation and rightfully was in the sphere of the individual and family.¹ Furthermore, constitutions should not have been radically changed because such documents tended to represent a careful balance of diverse creeds and natural rights.² Pessimistically, anti-prohibitionists also charged that human nature was constant and could not be reformed to make humanity wise, virtuous and prosperous.³

Liquor interests were especially critical of the "Des Moines Idea" which would allow the manufacture of alcohol, but would ban its sale in Iowa. They condemned the plan as hypocritical in that whiskey and beer, which prohibitionists condemned as poisonous and destructive to society, would be shipped and sold as beverages out of the state to damage the lives and societies of persons in Illinois and Missouri.⁴ The brewers also argued that such an action suppressed harmless liquors, such as beer, ale, and wine, but encouraged the manufacture of whiskey, which even brewers agreed was

¹Ibid.

²Staats Anzeiger, July 14, 1881.

³Leader, May 17, 1882. ⁴Leader, May 17, 1882.

poisonous.¹ Apparently, the export market for Iowa beer and ale was minimal, while competition outside of the state for distilled liquor was not as great; thus, while Iowa distilleries could have operated without a domestic Iowa market, breweries could not.

Like the prohibitionists, the liquor interests used the experiences of Maine, Kansas and other prohibition states to prove their arguments. Anti-prohibitionists traveled in Kansas and wrote gleeful letters describing the number of saloons and gambling establishments in the state.² The Iowa State Leader reported that in Topeka, Kansas, thirty-six businesses which had been licensed to sell soda water and other soft drinks, were actually selling liquor and were not even using such surreptitious codes as "sea foam" for beer and "iced tea" or "St. John's beverage" for whiskey.³ Similarly, Hans R. Claussen noted that Michigan, Massachusetts, and Ohio, after having abolished prohibition and reinstated high license laws, had high tax revenues, improved economies and higher rates of immigration.⁴

In retrospect, the prohibitionist and anti-amendment arguments were products of post-bellum United States society. Both relied extensively upon practical arguments

¹Register, April 13, 1882.

²Burlington Gazette, May 13, 1882.

³Leader, May 10, 1882.

⁴Register, April 25, 1882.

and pocket-book economics. Debates about the utility of the proposed amendment and prohibition laws reflected the tendency of both prohibitionists and their adversaries to depend upon common sense as a measurement of the credibility of their causes. Along with their contemporaries, prohibitionists and anti-prohibitionists relied upon the new reputation and respectability of science as a source of strength. While much scientific evidence which supported prohibitionist arguments about the physical dangers of alcohol was yet to be discovered, Iowa prohibitionists were aware of the basic theories which then existed and often cited local data to prove their contentions.¹ On the other hand, anti-prohibitionists at the time had the preponderance of scientific evidence to support their position and readily cited popular European and American authorities in debates.²

Philosophically, the prohibitionists were operating within the framework of an evolving reformist ideology. They shared with other reformers of the late nineteenth century and the progressive era a social philosophy derived in part from Thomas Jefferson's ideas about popular government and the fulfillment of human potentialities, and sought

¹James H. Timberlake, Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 40-47.

²Ibid.

to retain social patterns of agrarian democracy.¹ Concurrently, they rejected the strictures of Jeffersonian laissez-faire liberalism as incompatible with the needs of their age. Instead, they substituted a creed which viewed individuals as part of a total society which was responsible for maximum individual achievement and satisfaction within societal limits.² The Iowa prohibitionists philosophically would have agreed with a statement made in 1886 by Franklin B. Sanborn, General Secretary of the American Social Science Association, that: ". . . human society is, in fact, a whole; . . . a composite unity, so contrived by its Creator that nothing can long be hurtful to a part which is profitable to the aggregate."³

Prohibitionists also were in agreement with the reform tradition in their rejection of the absoluteness of property rights when in conflict with the general welfare.⁴ C. F. Clarkson and William E. Miller were clear in their contention that the public suffering concomitant with the liquor traffic had to be alleviated even at the expense of property.

¹Daniel Aaron, Men of Good Hope (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), pp. xi-xii.

²Sidney Fine, Laissez-Faire and the General-Welfare State (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956), p. 376.

³Quoted in ibid., pp. 347f.

⁴Ibid., pp. 264-66.

Finally, like other reformers, dry forces readily viewed the government as the vehicle for carrying out their reforms.¹ They did not consider government to be evil as long as it was controlled by majority will and morals. To them the positive exertion of state powers would have created a society in which individuals could work and live in relative health and safety as well as in social and economic security.

Opposing the reformist dogma of the late nineteenth century was a well-established conservative philosophy, the tenets of which were described by Robert Green McCloskey as an exaltation of property rights, anti-majoritarian attitudes, elitism, and a defense of the status quo. In order to achieve such principles, post-bellum conservatives tended to emphasize the pre-war liberal views of laissez-faire and personal liberty as ideal obstructions to the new reform exertions.² Thus, in using the rhetoric of Jeffersonian liberalism and traditional American values of individualism and liberty, conservatives defended during the late nineteenth century a status quo which naturally gave them privileges, little economic competition, minimum governmental coercion, and a controllable social environment.

¹ Ibid., pp. 167-69.

² Robert Green McCloskey, American Conservatism in the Age of Enterprise, 1865-1910 (New York: Harper and Row, 1951), pp. 22-25.

Anti-prohibitionists in defending their property and rights to manufacture, sell, buy, or consume alcoholic liquids tended to adopt a conservative philosophical position. With the exception of the traditional conservative value of elitism and natural superiority of a select few, anti-prohibitionist arguments directly paralleled attitudes expressed by such contemporary conservatives as Supreme Court Justice Stephen J. Field and William Graham Sumner. Anti-prohibitionists, especially those who were members of the State Anti-Amendment Club of Iowa, espoused property rights, the sanctity of the constitution, natural and divine rights, an unchangeable human nature, a carefully balanced status quo, and the principle of limited government.

Although prohibitionists and their opponents tended to use arguments and illustrations which resembled contemporary progressive and conservative ideologies, such labels should be applied with caution. The scope of debate was limited to the narrow topic of liquor restriction. Prohibitionist "liberalism" was limited in that dries tended to view their cause as a social panacea and did not participate in concurrent reformist movements which significantly defined the progressive era twenty years later. On the other hand, anti-prohibitionists in defending their property were forced to adopt a defensive which was both within the traditional American experience and upheld the status quo, yet many of the anti-amendment advocates considered themselves "liberal"

and identified with the "Liberal Republican" revolt of 1872. Thus, the philosophical heritage of the Iowa debaters on the question of prohibition appeared to be more a pragmatic application of workable arguments than the utilization of fully-developed and all-encompassing reformist or conservative ideologies.

CHAPTER III

PROHIBITIONIST PRESSURE GROUPS: THE CHURCHES

Denominational religions were powerful forces in molding the character and direction of late nineteenth century mid-America. By espousing a system of answers to basic human inquiries and fears about existence, death, and the meaning of life, churches were able to establish an interpretative framework for their members by which they evaluated their social environment and made economic and political decisions.¹ Moreover, behavior was forced to conform to the values of the denominations by the associational character of the congregations. Church members not only worshipped together, but intermarried, transacted business with each other, discussed political issues, and sought recreation in church societies. Churches instructed their members about the fundamentals of society, the rearing of their children, and the etiquette in burying their dead. Consequently, churches as organized social units were potential powers in political, social, and economic arenas if their leadership or mores directed them toward a course

¹Paul Kleppner, The Cross of Culture (New York: The Free Press, 1970), pp. 71-73.

of action.¹

Christian churches in the nineteenth century tended to be categorized according to their support of revivalism or adherence to orthodox ritualism. The liturgical churches stressed old orthodoxies, centralized authority and a style utilizing ornamentation, vestments, stylized prayers, and ritualized sacraments.² Each liturgical sect believed that it was the one true church of God and condemned most other churches as outsiders. The way to salvation, as one author described it, was "right belief." By carefully practicing the sacraments and rituals of the church, the individual was assured salvation.³ On the other hand, evangelicals rejected ritualism and seldom utilized elaborate ceremonies, vestments, or saints. The central idea of their doctrine was the belief that all men could be saved through direct experience with Christ rather than through the church. They demanded a conversion experience as a prerequisite for membership and insisted upon continuous evidence of salvation in the form of pious behavior.⁴ Prominent nineteenth century evangelicals were the Quakers, Congregationalists,

¹ Richard Jensen, The Winning of the Midwest: Social and Political Conflict, 1888-1896 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 58-59.

² Ibid., p. 64.

³ Kleppner, op. cit., pp. 71-74.

⁴ Ibid.; Jensen, op. cit., pp. 65-68.

Methodists, and Disciples of Christ; conversely, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Catholics, and Jews were predominately liturgical.¹

Evangelical churches usually favored prohibition and bestowed church social authority upon the supporters of the proposed amendment. The Ministerial Prohibitionary Amendment Convention held in Des Moines in June 1882 was composed of ministers throughout the state representing various denominations. The Committee on Resolutions included clergy from the Christian, Presbyterian, Baptist, Congregational, Friends, Evangelical, Methodist Episcopal, United Brethren, Unitarian, and Lutheran sects.² The Iowa State Register identified numerous Des Moines clergymen who were well-known and active prohibitionists, including ministers from Congregational, Methodist Episcopal, and Christian churches.³ Recurrent in prohibitionist reports, newspapers, and speaker lists were representatives of a few large Protestant denominations, especially the Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregational, United Brethren, and Evangelical. Most of these churches had openly declared support of prohibition and the proposed amendment at their

¹ Jensen, op. cit., pp. 60-64.

² (Des Moines) Iowa State Register, June 6, 1882
[hereinafter referred to as Register].

³ Ibid., April 2, 1882.

state conventions.

The Methodist Episcopal church was the most powerful and influential of the prohibitionist sects in Iowa. By 1880, there were almost 600 clergy and over 500 circuit clergy in Iowa serving 77,514 Methodists.¹ Methodism had a long history of supporting temperance and abstinence on a national level. As early as 1816 the national General Conference had prohibited ministers from selling spirituous or malt liquors; in 1848 the church, except its southern branch, had restored to its dogma the original Wesley rule against buying, selling, or drinking liquor, and in 1872 the General Conference passed a resolution supporting total legal prohibition.²

The Second Iowa Methodist Convention, meeting in Des Moines in June 1881, endorsed resolutions paralleling those supported by the national church. Resolutions favoring the actions of such pressure groups at the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and identifying the cause of temperance with that of divine will were easily passed by state

¹Proceedings of the Second Iowa Methodist Convention (Burlington: Acres, Blackmar and Company, 1881), p. 53.

²Charles W. Ferguson, Organizing to Beat the Devil: Methodists and the Making of America (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1971), pp. 355-67.

Methodist leaders.¹ Similarly, the proposed amendment was enthusiastically endorsed, and Methodists were directly to throw all of their power behind prohibitionists and politicians who supported total abstinence.²

Baptists also were potent prohibitionists. By 1880, they had a membership of over 25,000 in 400 churches which were served by 250 ministers. As early as 1875 at the thirty-fourth annual Iowa Baptist State Convention, they adopted a resolution condemning intemperance and the liquor traffic as sins against a Christian God.³ By 1877 Baptists were openly supporting temperance reform movements and rejoicing at "any step toward the enactment of a prohibitory law that will place the whiskey shop and the slave pen in the same infamous brotherhood in the future history of this land."⁴ They further pledged to petition the Iowa General Assembly to ban the sale of wine and beer as well as support a proposed amendment to the national constitution

¹ (Des Moines) Iowa State Leader, June 3, 1881 [hereinafter referred to as Leader]; Register, June 3, 1881.

² Proceedings of the Second Iowa Methodist Convention, op. cit., p. 155f.

³ Minutes of the Iowa Baptist State Convention: Thirty-fourth Annual Meeting, 1875, p. 10.

⁴ Minutes of the Iowa Baptist State Convention: Thirty-sixth Annual Meeting, 1877, p. 10.

which would have prohibited the manufacture and sale of alcoholic liquors after 1900.¹ Reports from later conventions indicated that Baptists worked with the W. C. T. U. and other temperance organizations for passage of the proposed state prohibition amendment.²

Congregational churches, including 234 congregations with 15,512 members, endorsed local prohibitionist activities in 1874. At the thirty-third annual convention they adopted a resolution praising temperance activities of the "Crusade of Women" to eliminate every saloon in the country, and Congregational ministers were encouraged to join the temperance reform movement.³ Conventions held through the rest of the decade continued to reflect the churches' prohibitionist activities. At every convention resolutions were passed which either praised actions of the W. C. T. U. or clarified church restrictions upon the use of alcoholic beverages or any association with the liquor traffic. In 1876 every Congregational church was declared to be a temperance society and was cautioned not to rent buildings to

¹ Ibid.

² Minutes of the Iowa Baptist State Convention: Thirty-eighth Annual Meeting, 1879, p. 10; Minutes of the Iowa Baptist State Convention Thirty-ninth Annual Meeting, 1880, p. 16; Minutes of the Iowa State Baptist Convention: Fortieth Annual Meeting, 1882, p. 16.

³ Minutes of the General Association of the Congregational Churches and Ministers of Iowa at their XXXIII Annual Meeting, 1874, p. 11.

liquor interests.¹ The following year, the use of alcohol in the preparation of food, for social occasions, or at communion was condemned.² At the thirty-eighth state convention, church leaders zealously supported the proposed prohibition amendment.³ In the conventions of the early 1880s, Congregationalists devoted one day of their annual meetings to prohibitionist speeches and resolutions. The temperance session in 1882 included speeches on such topics as "Does Prohibition Injure Business?" "Does Prohibition Prohibit?" and "The Church and Other Temperance Organizations," as well as an address on the role of the church in encouraging temperance reform delivered by Mrs. A. M. Palmer, State Missionary of the Iowa W. C. T. U.⁴

Other Protestant churches in Iowa strongly supported legalized prohibition as indicated by their resolutions at meetings. The United Brethren Church, with over 9,000 mem-

¹ Minutes of the General Association of the Congregational Churches and Ministers of Iowa at their XXXV Annual Meeting, 1876, pp. 8-9.

² Minutes of the General Association of the Congregational Churches and Ministers of Iowa at their XXVI Annual Meeting, 1877, pp. 33-34.

³ Minutes of the General Association of the Congregational Churches and Ministers of Iowa at their XXXVIII Annual Meeting, 1879, p. 12.

⁴ Minutes of the General Association of the Congregational Churches and Ministers of Iowa at their XLI Annual Meeting, 1882, p. 11.

bers in Iowa, as early as 1865, condemned any association with alcoholic beverages in its Doctrine and Discipline: "The distilling, vending, and use of ardent spirits as a beverage shall be, and is hereby forbidden throughout our society."¹ The Evangelical Association representing an Iowa membership of 3,652 endorsed a resolution stating that the "hand of God" was in the prohibition movement.² National church conferences of the Evangelical Association had supported total abstinence for over fifty years.³ Likewise, Presbyterians were zealous temperance workers. Nationally, the Presbyterian Church of the United States, representing northern congregations of the sect, endorsed abstinence, while Southern Presbyterians oscillated between temperance and prohibition depending upon the regions or local issues.⁴ Iowa Presbyterians tended to follow the lead of the northern

¹ Origin, Doctrine, Constitution and Discipline of the United Brethren in Christ (Dayton, Ohio: United Brethren Printing Establishment, 1865), p. 89.

² Register, April 15, 1882.

³ The Cyclopaedia of Temperance and Prohibition (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1891), p. 169.

⁴ Ibid., p. 494; Norman H. Clark, The Dry Years: Prohibition and Social Change in Washington (Seattle: University Press, 1965), pp. 109-11; Paul E. Isaac, Prohibition and Politics: Turbulent Decades in Tennessee, 1885-1920 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1965), pp. 23-24; James Benson Sellers, The Prohibition Movement in Alabama, 1702 to 1943 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1943), pp. 16, 49, 56.

branch. Local Presbytery districts had permanent temperance committees during the 1870s and later worked to suppress the manufacture and sale of liquor in the state.¹

The endorsement of prohibition laws and the proposed amendment by Iowa Protestant state conventions was not merely a local reflection of positions taken by national bodies. Records of district Iowa conferences indicated that support for prohibition by religious bodies was generated at local levels. The Upper Iowa Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church declared concern about intemperance and its damage to civil institutions as early as 1856. By 1859 the conference was using its influence to pressure legislators into supporting the prohibition of all alcoholic beverages. During the fight for the amendment, the conference regularly indicated its unqualified support.² The Northwest Iowa Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, including churches in Fort Dodge, Webster City, and Sioux City with a total membership of over 3,000, advocated at its first district convention in 1872 "radical temperance sentiment and

¹ Harvey Hostetler, Historical Sketch of the Presbytery of Fort Dodge (Vail, Iowa: Observer Printing House, 1889), p. 15.

² Stephen Norris Fellows, History of the Upper Iowa Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1856-1906 (Cedar Rapids: Laurance Press Company, 1907), pp. 87-88.

action, political and religious."¹ Two years later the convention supported a referendum on women's suffrage because it would strengthen the cause of temperance. At the same convention, ministers were directed to condemn the use of intoxicating liquors and support prohibitionist politicians.² By 1877, W. C. T. U. speakers were delivering reports to the conference, and resolutions were being passed condemning the license system and supporting total legal abstinence.³

Baptist district conventions also indicated a grass-roots interest and support of prohibition. The Central Iowa Baptist Association in 1875 declared that the churches should be more involved in the crusade and that "this warfare be not only defensive, but offensive."⁴ By 1881 the conference endorsed the actions of the W. C. T. U., pledged to work for the passage of the proposed amendment and dedicated the last Sunday of each quarter for instruction in temperance.⁵ The Cedar Valley Baptist Association in 1877

¹ First Annual Session of the Northwest Iowa Conference of the M. E. Church, 1872, pp. 1, 16.

² Third Annual Session of the Northwest Iowa Conference of the M. E. Church, 1874, pp. 22, 49.

³ Sixth Annual Session of the Northwest Iowa Conference of the M. E. Church, 1877, p. 6.

⁴ Minutes of the Twenty-fourth Anniversary of the Central Iowa Baptist Association, 1875, p. 6.

⁵ Minutes of the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Central Iowa Association, 1881, p. 9.

"bid God-speed to all workers in the Temperance Reform," and two years later pledged as a group to work for the temperance movement.¹ The Burlington Baptist Association, including three churches in Burlington, two in Mount Pleasant as well as several in small towns along the Mississippi river and maintaining a membership of over 1,200, zealously supported the dry crusade even though it was located in a section of the state which strongly opposed prohibition and the amendment. A permanent committee on temperance was organized in 1872, and a resolution was adopted to "teach and practice the strictest rules of temperance."² In 1877, the Association denounced the manufacture and traffic of intoxicating liquors; by 1880 entire sessions were devoted to the question of intemperance.³ The following year, the convention formally endorsed the proposed constitutional amendment.⁴

¹ Minutes of the Twenty-Second Annual Meeting of the Cedar Valley Baptist Association, 1877, p. 10; Minutes of the Twenty-fourth Annual Meeting of the Cedar Valley Baptist Association, 1879, p. 9.

² Minutes of the Fifteenth Anniversary of the Burlington Baptist Association, 1874, p. 4.

³ Minutes of the Eighteenth Anniversary of the Burlington Baptist Association, 1877, p. 6; Minutes of the Twenty-first Anniversary of the Burlington Baptist Association, 1880, p. 6.

⁴ Minutes of the Twenty-second Anniversary of the Burlington Baptist Association, 1881, p. 8.

Although immigrant groups tended to oppose prohibition in Iowa, especially the Germans, those belonging to the Protestant denominations mentioned supported prohibition. The Reverend Mr. C. H. Heidel read a paper on "The Relation of Foreign Population" at the Iowa Methodist Convention held in 1881 and assured "his English brethren that the [Methodist] Germans were with them in the fight for prohibition."¹ A similar view was expressed by the Reverend Mr. J. L. J. Barth, pastor of the Des Moines German Methodist Episcopal Church. Although his congregation was divided on the question of possible medicinal uses of alcohol, they were unified in their support of prohibiting the manufacture and sale of liquor as a beverage.² German Baptists, the Dunkards, also had a reputation for condemning the manufacture, sale and use of alcoholic beverages, although they did not participate in politics.³ Similarly, black Methodists at an annual meeting of the African Methodist Episcopal Church held in Burlington devoted a session to prohibition and the amendment.⁴

Arguments of religious prohibitionists in support of the proposed amendment and laws enforcing total abstinence

¹Leader, June 1, 1881.

²Register, April 2, 1882.

³Cyclopaedia of Temperance and Prohibition, op. cit., p. 187.

⁴Burlington Hawkeye, June 2, 1882.

contained both secular and religious elements. Such secular arguments were reflected in the sermons of John McLean Conrad, Methodist Episcopal minister in southwest rural Iowa.¹ In discussing the rural economics of prohibition, Conrad merely attached a printed column from a prohibitionist newspaper to his sermon and added a moralistic paragraph in the margin. The article argued that the amount of United States grain used by distillers was too small to influence the price farmers received for their produce. A table was reproduced which demonstrated that during the 1870s when the production of gallons of alcohol had increased, the price of corn had fallen. The distillers, moreover, were making an

¹ John McLean Conrad reflected the experience and pietism of rural Methodist preachers in Iowa. Born in New York in 1826, he was raised a Lutheran. He married Martha M. Baker in Brookville, Indiana and moved to Iowa where he worked as a farmer and teacher. In 1856 at Decatur City, Iowa he converted to Methodism and was licensed to preach at Pleasanton, Iowa. Two years later he was admitted on a trial basis to the Iowa Methodist Conference. By 1860 he was admitted in "full connection" in the Western Iowa District, where he served in a number of small rural churches and circuits: Lawrenceburg circuit 1858, Panora 1859-60, Magnolia 1861-62, Quincy and Simpson 1863, Newbern 1864-66, Osceola 1867, Garden Grove 1868, Presiding Elder of Chariton District 1869-72, Murray 1873-74, College Springs 1875, Shenandoah 1876, Malvern 1877-78, Union Grove 1879-80, Farmer City 1881-82, Cambridge 1883, Cromwell 1884, Nevinville 1885-86. He carefully compiled his sermons in a ledger book dated 1867. Included was his sermon delivered at the Iowa Annual Methodist Conference in 1859; however, most of the sermons post-date the Civil War and extend to a Thanksgiving sermon delivered in 1893. He died in Nevinville, Iowa in 1895. Minutes of the Thirty-sixth Session of the Des Moines Annual Conference of the M. E. Church, 1895, IX, 319-20.

unfair profit from the production of farmers. Three times in the short article, the statistics were repeated that "the distillers are paying the farmers of this country about \$5,000,000 annually for corn, and the victims of strong drink are paying the liquor dealers of the land over \$800,000,000 annually for their alcoholic beverages."¹

While Conrad obviously was impressed with the article, he apparently believed that the materialistic motive was insufficient. He added a moralism that it was wrong for a farmer to sell grain to distillers in that "it may go out on a mission of intoxication with its attendant evils and ruin."²

In Conrad's major prohibition sermon entitled "Prohibition, our Only Safeguard," he extensively quoted scientific sources claiming that alcohol damaged the health of users. He cited medical authorities in England and the United States that "a very large portion of human misery, including poverty, disease and crime is induced by the use of alcoholic or fermented beverages," while total abstinence resulted in perfect health.³ He also compared prohibition

¹ J. M. Conrad, "Prohibition from the Standpoint of Political Economy" (MSS in Iowa Department of History and Archives), Methodist Episcopal Church, Box 42: "Miscellaneous Sermons."

² Ibid.

³ J. M. Conrad, "Prohibition, our Only Safeguard" (MSS in Iowa Department of History and Archives), Methodist Episcopal Church, Box 42: Miscellaneous Sermons.

with generally accepted legal restrictions: "Legislation on temperance has nothing in it peculiar that I can see--Other laws limit the control of property--and the modes of human actions."¹

Although secular arguments were frequently cited in sermons, appeals reflecting more pietistic and evangelistic attitudes predominated. The religious arguments tended to mirror the fundamentalist dogma of the divine nature of society and the role of the individual within it as well as pious maxims on labor, sustenance, and the relationship of church and government.

Religiously-oriented prohibitionists were appalled by the impact of intemperance upon the general society. Conrad described the influence of liquor to a rural audience as:

The ground enriched by the drainage of the barnyard produced rank and noxious weeds, so intemperance is the congenial soil where many of the vices luxuriate. It is not a vice that exists alone or operates singly, but there connects with a train of others, Profanity, Obscenity, Licentiousness, Gambling, and Often Theft, Robbery and Murder, General Profligacy and Abandoned recklessness.²

Henry Rickel, addressing the Second Iowa Methodist Convention, agreed that alcohol destroyed society in that it created a "vicious element of society, fills prisons,

¹ Ibid.

² J. M. Conrad, "Untitled Sermon" (MSS in Iowa Department of History and Archives), Methodist Episcopal Church, Box 42: "Miscellaneous Sermons."

asylums and almshouses."¹ Evangelical concern about the affect of liquor upon society was magnified by a belief that society was a divine institution.² While liturgicals tended to focus upon people and individual actions as a means of attaining salvation, pietists viewed humanity within a social context and believed that God had created society in part for the redemption of mankind; thus, fundamentalists considered intemperant devastations of the social order to be not merely crimes against humanity, but also sins against a holy plan. The result of such a belief was an intense and emotional support of temperance as the method for the salvation of society. It was common for ministers to depict the temperance crusade as a battle between civilization (equated with Christianity) and evil, and to devoutly proclaim as did a Des Moines Baptist clergyman that:

. . . we are engaged in an irrepressible conflict, and we must conquer or be conquered. A Christian Government can't exist, half drunk and half sober--half slave and half free.³

Religious support for prohibition was not only to regenerate Providential social institutions, but also to save the souls of men. Fundamentalists believed that alcohol destroyed inhibitions and drove drunkards to sin.

¹Proceedings of the Second Iowa Methodist Convention, op. cit., p. 21.

²Conrad, "Prohibition, our Only Safeguard," loc. cit.

³Register, April 4, 1882.

Conrad vividly described a murderer who was temporarily restrained by his conscience from killing an infant by the child's innocent smile, until the doomed man drank a glass of brandy and "committed the cruel act without pity."¹ Rickel argued that alcohol destroyed moral passions and impulses forcing the drunkard to sin and imperil his soul. Not only were the souls of drunkards lost, but also those of their sons. Declaring that immoral predispositions were genetically transmitted to children, Rickel declared that the "iniquity of the fathers" fell upon the "children unto the third and fourth generation."² Particularly tragic and critical to Rickel was the belief that liquor made men immune to evangelistic persuasions even though the alcoholic wanted to gain salvation.³ Such an appeal was powerful to Methodists, Baptists, and other evangelicals because of their proclaimed duty to save humanity from hell. A Methodist songbook used during the amendment debate reflected the intensity of this missionary duty of Christians by citing I John iii, 17:

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his
brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels

¹Conrad, "Prohibition, our Only Safeguard," loc. cit.

²Proceedings of the Second Iowa Methodist Convention, loc. cit.

³Ibid.

of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of
God in him?¹

A hymn written by Philip Phillips followed, admonishing the faithful to "Do the Right" even though the task might be difficult, dreary or dangerous. The last stanza warned:

Some will hate thee, some will love thee,
Some will flatter, some will slight
Cease from man, and look above thee²
"Trust in God, and do the right."²

With a doctrine declaring that mankind was either destined for salvation or hell and that each sinner lost directly reflected upon the lack of devotion of Christian communities, there was an obvious necessity of eliminating such an abomination as alcohol which drove beings to depredation as well as immunized them against Christian preachings.

Concomitant with pietistic concerns about salvation were beliefs that labor and nourishment were divinely controlled. Conrad stated that God's inheritance to mankind was labor. Labor, he continued, engaged the mind and occupied the body in profitable ways, preoccupying man against vice and temptations. Conversely he charged that "laziness is the hot-bed of vice, and indolence [.] the prolific source of evil."³ Conrad proposed that all labor

¹ Phillip Phillips, Song Sermons (New York: Nelson and Phillips, 1877), p. 32.

² Ibid., p. 33.

³ Conrad, "Prohibition, our Only Safeguard," loc. cit.

which resulted in producing more human goods than were actually consumed by the laborer was productive labor, while labor which consumed more than it produced was unproductive. Obviously, to Conrad, alcoholic production was unproductive labor in that the product damaged health, shortened life, ravished society and destroyed the nutritive value of the grain used in its manufacture.¹

The nature of the amendment crusade required religious prohibitionists to deviate from their attack on the evils of alcohol in order to defend what anti-prohibitionists charged were church infringements upon the principle of separation of church and state. The editor of the Burlington Hawkeye expressed the anti-amendment sentiment when he charged that pro-amendment churches were acting as an organized force in seeking to dominate the legislation of the country. While accepting the right of ministers within their spheres of influence to "fearlessly teach what they believe to be truth" and of Christian men to "carry their honest convictions into politics," he totally rejected the right of a church as an institution to demand legislation.² Polk county dry leader, C. C. Nourse, answered the charge at the Second Methodist Convention. He proposed that the anti-prohibitionist view represented a too rigid interpretation

¹ Ibid.

² Burlington Hawkeye, May 31, 1882.

of the doctrine of separation of church and state. Such a view, he claimed would result in surrendering the nation to the control of "the immoral and the irreligious, or to be the fool who hath said in his heart there is no God!"¹ The Des Moines County Temperance Committee concurred, citing the Apostle Paul in a letter to the Philippians that their politics should be in accord with the gospel of Christ.²

Religious drys were also forced to reinterpret biblical passages often quoted by anti-prohibitionists which purportedly condoned the use of wine. A letter to the editor of the anti-amendment Burlington Gazette quoted Paul as endorsing the consumption of liquor: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all in the glory of God."³ The author of the letter later cited Martin Luther as having said: "Who has no love for wife, wine and song, remains a fool for all his lifetime long."⁴ A biblical passage frequently quoted by anti-prohibitionists was from Paul's letter to Timothy: "Drink no longer water, but take a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine infirmity."⁵ F. W. Evans, representing the Constitution Amendment Society,

¹Proceedings of the Second Iowa Methodist Convention, op. cit., p. 26.

²Burlington Hawkeye, May 31, 1882.

³Burlington Gazette, June 26, 1882.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Leader, June 22, 1881.

attempted to refute the latter biblical passage by arguing that Paul had meant "juice of the Grape," rather than an intoxicating beverage.¹ Methodist songbooks countered other biblical evidence which supported the consumption of wine by citing passages which condemned its use. Popular passages were Proverbs xxiii, 31, 32, and I Corinthians vi, 10:

Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God.²

Anti-prohibitionists also placed amendment forces on the defensive by contending that God had given man the "personal liberty" to sin. The Davenport Gazette had charged that prohibition was anti-Christian" in that it ran counter to the divine plan for salvation. All men, according to the editor of the Gazette, must be free to chose good or evil and then be held responsible for their choice. The prohibitionists, in removing temptation, destroyed the divine test for individual salvation.³ Prohibitionists were scornful of the anti-amendment conception of salvation. A Winterset minister in answering the Gazette said that in using the newspaper's logic, "God would allow the devil to

¹ Ibid.

² Phillips, op. cit., p. 30.

³ Reprinted in the Register, March 31, 1882.

plant more trees, and license a shop" in the Garden of Eden.¹ Recalling that God had created humanity within society, Conrad contended that God had given all rights to society, not to individuals. Moreover, Conrad's deity had never conferred the right to injure or destroy the well-being of society. Thus, prohibitionists concluded, the idea of personal liberty was a sham: "Man has the power to sin--but no right. . . . He has power to debase and bestialize himself by intemperance in getting drunk, but it is a violation of right."²

Non-secular prohibitionists did not limit their sermons against liquor to vivid descriptions of its destruction and evil, but also proposed positive actions which dutiful Christians could do in order to make prohibition a reality. "Moral suasion," in which individuals were persuaded to abandon imbibing, was rejected as ineffective. J. M. Conrad summarized the prohibitionist rationale in rejecting personal moral appeals in his sermon: "All the moral suasion that can be brought to bear cannot overpower the liquor traffic--So long as the supply is kept up and within reach. . . ."³ Conrad argued that the profitability of the liquor trade would motivate unscrupulous men

¹ Winterset Chronicle reprinted in ibid.

² Conrad, "Prohibition, our Only Safeguard," loc. cit.

³ Ibid.

to defy divine and human laws in order to gain wealth. Thus, it was the inherent nature of liquor interests to encourage intemperance in order to maintain profits and production. To Conrad and like-minded prohibitionists, the only alternative was general prohibition of the manufacture, sale, and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

While prohibitionists believed and claimed that their crusade was divinely inspired and directed, they were forced to translate their holy cause into prohibitionist activity and votes. Drys feared that their followers, knowing that such a powerful force as God was working for the amendment and believing that human effort was superfluous, would become over-confident and lethargic. E. K. Young, a Des Moines Methodist minister, advanced the idea that divine support required human effort and argued that his Christian diety's plan was "that human advancement shall be the product of human endeavors."¹ A Des Moines Baptist minister agreed when he postulated that "moral sentiment" would make prohibition succeed.²

Declaring themselves unified, Christian churches went on an offensive against liquor. They devoted Sunday-school lessons to inculcate their young against the evils of alcohol, held prayer meetings to appeal for the success of their proposed amendment, and reminded fellow-Christians of

¹Register, April 4, 1882.

²Ibid.

their duties to reform society according to divine will. Political actions were also emphasized because the amendment itself required political approval. Conrad told his congregation not to be timid about supporting prohibition in the political sphere and only to vote for candidates to the Iowa General Assembly, Congress, and state executive offices who openly supported prohibition. He reminded his followers that the brewers were not tolerant of prohibitionist candidates for offices and quoted a statement made at the brewers' annual state convention which was often repeated by secular and religious dry workers: "He that is not for us is against us."¹

Liturgical churches generally did not share prohibitionist sympathies with pietists, although the liturgicals had temperance elements within their membership. Two churches representative of the types of congregations remaining aloof from the amendment debate or containing elements making their acceptance of prohibition impossible were the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Roman Catholic Church.

In 1880 the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Iowa had a membership of over 11,000. The largest churches of the diocese were located in the

¹Conrad, "Prohibition, our Only Safeguard," loc. cit.

Mississippi river county cities and accounted for nearly one-fourth of the total Episcopalian membership.¹ The dignity and sophistication of the Episcopalian denomination tended to attract upper-class American society and contained a disproportionate number of urban dwellers as well as business and professional elite.²

Through the 1870s, Iowa Episcopalians ignored the prohibition issue. Their state conventions were largely devoted to such business matters as making appointments, setting salaries, and establishing new administrative districts.³ The twenty-eighth convention held in 1881 did note the establishment of the Church Temperance Society. This society had been organized by the national church the same year and had as objectives the promotion of temperance, the rehabilitation of the intemperate, and the removal of the

¹ Journal of the Twenty-third Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Iowa, 1876, p. 52; Journal of the Twenty-fifth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Iowa, 1878, pp. 68-70; Journal of the Twenty-seventh Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Iowa, 1880, p. 57.

² Jensen, op. cit., p. 77.

³ Journal of the Twenty-third Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Iowa, op. cit., passim; Journal of the Twenty-fourth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Iowa, 1877, passim.

causes of intemperance.¹ The following year, the Iowa Diocese Convention organized a Division Branch of the Church Temperance Society. Church leaders heard a report of the evils of intemperance in the cities and especially among the "poorer classes" where want, squalor and wretchedness were caused by their "habitual intemperate use of strong drink."² Episcopalians were invited to take one or both pledges of the Church Temperance Society. The first pledge required abstinence from all intoxicating beverages, while the second pledge demanded the promotion of "Christian Temperance." Although total abstinence was desired by the society, Episcopalians were not pressured to take the first pledge in order to become members of the society. Leaders of the church eschewed the actions of self-proclaimed "temperance reformers" and admitted only a remote relationship with them. Bishop William Stevens Perry in referring to more militant Christian prohibitionists said at the twenty-ninth convention:

If the disappointments and disasters, the illiberal fanaticism and unwarranted license, of the so-called temperance reform have at length--even though

¹ Journal of the Twenty-eighth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Iowa, 1881, p. 37; Cyclopaedia of Temperance and Prohibition, op. cit., p. 81.

² Journal of the Twenty-ninth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Iowa, 1882, p. 55.

indirectly--occasioned the development of this more excellent way of dealing with a great and growing moral evil, these very excesses have not been without fruit.¹

The Roman Catholic Church, including approximately 140,000 members in Iowa, also had forces within it working for temperance or prohibition. Father Mathew Societies were active in Iowa temperance campaigns. These had been established by an Irish priest who by 1840 had purportedly enrolled over one-half of the population of Ireland in his Abstinence Society and had transplanted his society in the United States in 1841.² The Third Plenary Council of the Roman Catholic Prelates in the United States in 1885 issued a pastoral letter which has been described as one of the most influential documents issued by the American hierarchy. The council condemned profaning the Sabbath by selling liquor and beer on Sunday or by frequenting saloons. They also reminded the laity that the Sabbath could best be observed by keeping away from drinking places on Saturday night: "Carry your wages home to your families, where they rightfully belong. Turn a deaf ear, therefore, to every temptation; and then Sunday will be a bright day for all the

¹Ibid., pp. 56-57.

²Joan Bland, Hiberian Crusade: The Story of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1951), pp. 22-43.

family."¹ Also significant, although apparently not active in Iowa, was the Catholic Total Abstinence Union, organized in Baltimore, Maryland in 1872, with the objective of spreading the ideal of total abstinence among loyal Roman Catholics.²

Most Iowa Catholics, comprising 15 per cent of the state population, were not sympathetic with legal prohibition. Father J. F. Brazil of the Des Moines St. Ambrose Catholic Church clarified the Catholic opinion of the amendment in a letter to the Iowa State Register. Brazil first declared that since the amendment was a political issue, the Church as an institution could not take a position and thereby meddle in governmental affairs. However, as a private citizen expressing his views, Brazil opposed the amendment for two reasons. First, he considered the constitution "too sacred to be engrafted on it any other than fundamental laws and principles."³ Secondly, he did not consider the act of consuming alcoholic beverages in itself to be a sin, but only the intemperate use of liquor:

¹ "The Pastoral Letter of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, on 1884, on Sunday Desecration, Intemperance and Forbidden Societies," reprinted in American Catholic Thought on Social Questions, ed. by Aaron I. Abell (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1968), pp. 116-17.

² Bland, op. cit., pp. 54-56.

³ Register, April 2, 1882.

I know that drunkenness constantly indulged in brings with it in its train the wreck and ruin of character, fortune, body, and soul. But so does every other vice, if intemperately indulged in or persistently pursued. But does the poor man, after he comes home in the evening from a hard day's work, exposed to a scorching and broiling sun, sin if he takes a little stimulant to enable him to take the food necessary for the sustenance of his exhausted body? If the virtue of temperance be abused by the few, why should the rest of the world be refused that by law which they do not abuse by moderate use?¹

As liturgicals, Roman Catholics and Episcopalians considered membership in their churches and the proper progression through sacred rituals to be the means of attaining salvation. As religious agents, they did not view the general society as an integral part of the divine process. Thus, they were not compelled to support prohibitionist social reforms, but preferred to view temperate imbibing as a personal, secular matter outside the realm of religious coercion. Despite the pressure of temperance groups within their membership to induce the churches to support prohibition, the institutions resisted and made moderate statements advocating the temperate consumption of alcoholic beverages. Neither church as a body supported the proposed constitutional amendment in Iowa and officially refrained from taking any stand by espousing the doctrine of separation of church and state.

A number of theories have been proposed to explain

¹
Ibid.

the division of Christian churches upon prohibition. James Timberlake in his study of denominational attitudes toward prohibition twenty years after the Iowa amendment crusade suggested that religious supporters of prohibition were part of a liberal social gospel movement.¹ The phenomenon of the social gospel which emerged from Protestant denominations in the last two decades of the nineteenth century emphasized the reformation of society rather than the salvation of individuals; however, social gospellers' actions were tied to earlier revivalism in their belief that a Christianized environment would facilitate conversion of the individual.² Social gospellers broadened the concept of sin from the orthodox view of private individual acts to a more encompassing condemnation of public actions which would devastate or weaken society.³ Iowa prohibitionist religious speakers argued for their cause in expressions similar to the social concerns of the social gospel. Ministers in Iowa cities called upon their congregations to support the amendment in order to Christianize society, alleviate the societal

¹ James Timberlake, Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 23-38.

² Sidney Fine, Laissez-Faire and the General-Welfare State (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956), pp. 170-71.

³ Fred Nicklason, "Henry George: Social Gospeller," American Quarterly, XXII (Fall, 1970), 651.

ravages caused by alcohol, and to facilitate missionary work among lower classes. Even rural circuit ministers, personified by J. M. Conrad in southwestern Iowa, delivered sermons which declared the divine social nature of mankind and the Christian responsibility to work for the betterment of society.

Opposing the progressive social Christianity was what Henry May described as "conservative social Christianity." While these denominations were not unconcerned about social unrest and degradation, their solutions were traditional, requiring reform through voluntary individual actions. Therefore, they refused to take public positions with political implications.¹ Although May was describing Protestant denominational positions during the post-bellum period, his category superficially resembles both the Roman Catholic and Episcopalian tendencies in Iowa during the 1880s.

The separation of churches according to their congruence with progressive or conservative social Christianity does have its anomalies. Both Fine and May describe the progressive Christians as having supported the reformation of the labor and wage system, as well as equal rights and

¹Henry F. May, Protestant Churches and Industrial America (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1949), pp. 163-64.

justice for all men and the elimination of poverty.¹ Iowa church records indicate that the scope of social reform was limited to support of prohibition and sabbatarianism. Prohibition was to Iowa religious leaders a panacea for all social evils; their only social program beyond the passage of the prohibition amendment was its enforcement. The prohibition crusade was also not a new movement. Major Protestant denominations, except the Lutherans and Episcopalians, had supported the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance in 1826 and pressured state legislatures to adopt state prohibition after passage of the Maine Law in 1851.² Thus, if the prohibition movement is equated with the social gospel, the roots of progressive social Christianity must be extended to ante-bellum America. Moreover, the Protestant Episcopal Church which did not support Iowa prohibitionism was the first church to adopt a labor program in the spirit of the social gospel.³ It could be concluded that the inconsistencies resulting from identifying Iowa religious prohibitionists as social gospellers as early as 1880 are such that the analysis is invalid.

¹ Fine, op. cit., pp. 180-81; May, op. cit., pp. 170-71.

² John R. Bodo, The Protestant Clergy and Public Issues, 1812-1848 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), pp. 188-89.

³ Fine, op. cit., pp. 180-81.

Another possible explanation of the positions of denominations is the extent of immigrant control of the church body. Joan Bland in her study of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union concluded that the movement, while loyally Catholic, had accepted the frame of reference of respectable Protestant America. It was composed of prosperous, civic-minded, Americanized Catholics who exhibited an almost fanatical Americanism.¹ Their counterparts were the Irish and German Catholics who accepted the principle of temperance, but considered prohibition to be extreme.² Lutherans were also divided according to nationality. The General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, often described by contemporaries as the "English branch," adopted in 1887 a resolution openly supporting prohibition and condemning the manufacture and traffic of alcoholic beverages.³ On the other hand, German Lutherans maintained a position similar to that of the German Catholics.⁴ In describing the Lutheran dichotomy, a later prohibitionist source wrote:

Since the Lutheran Church is recruited mainly by emigration from Europe, the foreign element bringing with it un-American customs and prejudices,

¹ Bland, op. cit., pp. 267-71.

² Register, April 2, 1882.

³ Cyclopaedia of Temperance and Prohibition, op. cit., pp. 410-11.

⁴ Ibid., p. 411; Register, April 2, 1882.

especially in regard to the use of liquor, it is not strange that Lutherans have been beset with peculiar difficulties in joining the temperance reform. . . .¹

The division of churches on the prohibition question along ethnic cultural lines is simplistic. German Methodist Episcopal churches in Iowa strongly supported the amendment.² Concurrently, German Baptists had a long history of support of prohibition, while the two counties in Iowa which most strongly voted for the amendment were populated by 13.5 per cent and 30.1 per cent Norwegian immigrants.³

A third explanation already suggested is that pietistic churches tended to support prohibition, while liturgical congregations remained neutral or opposed to prohibition. Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, Disciples of Christ, Evangelicals, and United Brethren as fundamentalist denominations were zealous proponents of the proposed amendment. Conversely, such liturgical bodies as the Roman Catholic and Protestant Episcopal churches did not support prohibitionist efforts during the early 1880s.

The liturgical-pietistic dichotomy should not be

¹Ernest H. Cherrington, (ed.), Standard Encyclopedia of the Alcohol Problem (6 vols; Westerville, Ohio: American Issue Publishing Company, 1925-30), IV, 1616.

²Register, April 2, 1882.

³Frank D. Jackson, Secretary of State, Census of Iowa for the Year 1885 (Des Moines: George E. Roberts, State Printer, 1885), pp. 164-66.

applied too rigidly. Many Protestant congregations were not easily categorized as evangelical or liturgical. Both Jensen and Timberlake classified the Lutherans as liturgical, noting as exceptions the Swedish and native American Lutherans who were evangelical.¹ However, contemporary sources did not necessarily concur. The Iowa State Register in surveying the denominational support of prohibition prior to the referendum, stated that the Swedish Lutherans, while "not so enthusiastic for the habit of beer drinking as their German neighbors" had taken no position on the amendment.² Furthermore, the Norwegian Lutheran churches were divided along a continuum ranging from extreme pietism to liturgicalism. The Norwegian pietists were descendents of a sect established in Norway by Hans Nielsen Hauge. His preachings primarily appealed to the rural poor who spoke Norwegian and adhered to old customs. On the other hand, aristocrats, clergy, and urban dwellers who had assimilated the Danish language and culture worshipped in churches closely following Danish Lutheran orthodoxy. Eventually Norwegian nationalism and democratic upsurges in the mid-nineteenth century caused a syncretism of the churches into a cen-

¹ Jensen, op. cit., p. 60; Timberlake, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

² Register, April 2, 1882.

tralized Norwegian Lutheran state church.¹ In the United States, where such centralization and nationalistic forces were lacking, sectarianization resulted. In Iowa, Norwegian Lutherans were divided into three synods. The Synod for the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (also called the Norwegian Synod), having twenty-eight clergy in Iowa, insisted upon trained clergy and practiced orthodox Lutheranism. The United Norwegian Lutheran Church with forty-four pastors was strongly evangelical. The Hauge Synod with thirteen ministers was the most pietistic in which lay preachers, prayer groups and lay participation were encouraged. The latter two synods tended to support prohibition, but the Norwegian Synod discouraged activities by Scandinavian prohibitionists.

Despite the difficulty in explaining the groupings of religious sects which supported or rejected prohibition in Iowa, the impact of the churches upon the referendum in 1882 was profound. As Table I indicates, sects which strongly endorsed the amendment, the Methodists and Baptists, were found in larger proportions in the ten counties in which the largest majorities for the amendment were cast. As the percentage of prohibitionist votes dropped, the number of

¹ J. Magnus Rohne, Norwegian American Lutheranism Up to 1872 (New York: Macmillan Company, 1926), pp. 12-17.

TABLE I

DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS IN IOWA GROUPED BY
SELECTED COUNTY VOTES ON AMENDMENT REFERENDUM

DENOMINATIONS	Prohibition Counties ¹	Mean Counties ²	Anti-Prohib. Counties ³	State Averages
Baptist	6.0%	5.9%	4.1%	5.5%
Christian	7.4	6.2	2.5	5.9
Congregational	2.7	2.8	3.4	3.9
Episcopalian	1.0	0.5	1.8	1.3
Lutheran	20.2	13.4	17.2	15.0
Methodist	25.4	22.0	13.9	21.1
Presbyterian	7.3	7.4	6.3	6.8
Roman Catholic	6.4	13.4	26.4	15.3

¹The ten counties voting most strongly for the prohibition amendment were Emmet (88.1%), Winnebago (86.1%), Dickinson (78.6%), Clarke (78.1%), Story (77.6%), Cherokee (76.6%), Buena Vista (76.5%), Appanoose (74.9%), Ringgold (74.2%), and Calhoun (74.1%).

²The ten counties clustering about the state mean vote for the amendment (55.3%) were Marion (57.3%), Grundy (57.2%), Washington (56.7%), Chickasaw (56.4%), Harrison (56.1%), Webster (54.3%), Decatur (54.1%), Kossuth (53.0%), Shelby (51.6%), and Benton (51.3%).

³The ten counties voting most strongly against the amendment were Dubuque (16.3%), Scott (22.0%), Des Moines County (34.4%), Wapello (37.0%), Clayton (38.1%), Plymouth (38.7%), Allamakee (38.9%), Lee (39.2%), Johnson (40.4%), and Jackson (40.6%).

SOURCES: Frank D. Jackson, Secretary of State, Census of Iowa for the Year 1885 (Des Moines: George E. Roberts, State Printer, 1885), pp. 611-59; W. M. McFarland, Secretary of State, Census of Iowa for the Year 1895 (Des Moines: F. R. Conaway, State Printer, 1896), pp. 428-36.

Baptists and Methodists also declined. Conversely, Roman Catholics were over-represented in anti-amendment counties, equalled the state average in the mean counties, and were under-represented in the strongly prohibitionist counties. Significantly, the Lutheran and Presbyterian churches which included synods and denominations ranging from pietism and ritualism were well represented in both prohibitionist and anti-prohibitionist counties. Using Jensen's estimates that evangelical church memberships represented 40 per cent of the state population, while liturgical churches included only 29 per cent, it may be concluded that the prohibitionist support of such churches was a major source of prohibitionist strength in the state during the 1880s.¹

¹Jensen, op. cit., pp. 85-88.

CHAPTER IV

PROHIBITIONIST PRESSURE GROUPS: THE W. C. T. U.

Major sources of prohibitionist strength during the amendment campaign were pressure groups composed of dedicated anti-liquor workers. Organizing themselves into numerous associations, prohibitionists attempted to mobilize existing support into cohesive factions and convince neutralists to join their cause. Prohibitionist pressure groups operated at various levels and spheres of Iowa society. Specialized groups were established to actuate women, men, children, occupational interests, and religious denominations. A grand alliance of temperance groups attempted to coalesce prohibitionist organizations into an integrated, dynamic political force.

Measured in actual numbers, most temperance associations existing in Iowa in 1882 had been temporarily created to fight for passage of the proposed amendment. Amendment Clubs were established in several counties in 1880. Their approach was typified by the Polk County Amendment Club which outlined a temperance campaign at a convention held in February 1881 to organize each township in the county by appointing three persons in each local unit to canvass citi-

zens and establish chapters.¹ During the summer at Clear Lake, the State Amendment Association was founded with plans to establish local chapters in each county.² Other prohibitionist groups operating during the amendment crusade have since faded into obscurity leaving only their names, which occasionally were listed in Woman's Christian Temperance Union records or temperance newspapers, as evidence that they had been created. The Young Men's State Temperance Association, Juvenile Societies, Tribes of Jonathan, numerous unaffiliated "Reform Clubs," and a Christian Alliance temporarily provided associations to which special interest or age groups could gravitate and work for the anti-liquor cause.

Two associations which did exist for several years were state affiliates of national movements. One was the Blue Ribbon Club, an organization established during the early 1870s in Maine.³ The movement concentrated upon convincing alcoholics to voluntarily abandon the consumption of

¹(Des Moines) Iowa State Register, February 6, 1881
[hereinafter referred to as Register].

²Register, September 29, 1881.

³The Cyclopaedia of Temperance and Prohibition (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1891), p. 57.

liquor and to take a total abstinence
were instructed to wear red ribbons; four years later, both men and women
Women and children sympathetic to the cause wore white ribbons; however, the
W. C. T. U. members to represent their membership in a Blue Ribbon
to Iowa in 1877 when temperance societies gathered in
Moines to enthusiastic crowds in Marshalltown and Des Moines
of torch-light processions and a massive decline of drunkards, and
temperance hymns and marches. Iowans signed pledges.² Local
after the jubilees, were local to prohibitionist in-fighting
had never approved of the republican political nature, in 1878 created
Ribbon Club" as a secret organization of members from the local Blue Ribbon
Black Ribbon Clubs were never officers resigned from the W

¹Dan Elbert Clark, "Temperance in Iowa, 1861-1878," Iowa Journal VI (July, 1908), 371.

²Ibid., pp. 371-72.

because the general membership criticized their sponsorship of a national ribbon speaker in Des Moines who had criticized actions of the Iowa W. C. T. U. and the proposed amendment.¹ Despite the moderate program of the Blue Ribbon corps, the movement was a significant influence in Iowa during the early 1880s.²

Another national association operating in Iowa during the amendment campaign was the Independent Order of Good Templars. Founded in central New York in 1851, the order spread over the United States and Canada. In 1868 it was introduced into Great Britain and eventually had chapters in several European countries, Australia, India, Central and South America, and South and West Africa. By 1882 there were fifty Grand Lodges in the United States with a membership of 221,116.³ Dedicated to the principle of total abstinence, the Templars were willing to work for legal prohibition of the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicating beverages.⁴ However, their major concern was to combat the gemütlich quality of saloons by creating non-alcoholic substitutes in which members could experience

¹Register, April 7, 1881.

²Ibid., June 4, 1882.

³(Des Moines) Iowa State Leader, May 29, 1882 [hereinafter referred to as Leader].

⁴Ibid.

companionship, "wholesome" entertainment and "clean manhood."¹ The Iowa Grand Lodge had over five thousand members and regularly sent representatives to national conventions.²

An organization representing a unique phase of the prohibition movement was the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Founded as part of a women's crusade in Ohio, the national union was established in December 1873. By 1883 local unions had been organized in every state except North Carolina and Mississippi.³ The W. C. T. U. tended to electrify existing state temperance movements and, as a result, was described as an important force in local temperance crusades in most state histories of prohibition during the 1870s and 1880s. The historian of temperance in Washington described the W. C. T. U. as having brought "new strength and enthusiasm to the movement against liquor."⁴ In California, the W. C. T. U. was assessed as the most

¹ Norman H. Clark, The Dry Years: Prohibition and Social Change in Washington (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1965), pp. 28-29.

² Leader, May 29, 1882.

³ James Benson Sellers, The Prohibition Movement in Alabama, 1702 to 1943 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1943), p. 53.

⁴ N. H. Clark, op. cit., p. 29.

effective temperance organization in the state.¹ Although the establishment of state unions was retarded in Southern states, once organized in the early 1880s, they were noted for their "sweeping zeal" that strengthened temperance in the region.²

The W. C. T. U. of Iowa was no less significant in state politics. Local proponents and critics of prohibition usually mentioned the women's crusade as a powerful force encouraging passage of the proposed amendment. The editor of the sympathetic Iowa State Register described the phase of prohibitionist activity in the early 1880s as "largely a woman's question, a contest of the home, for the home, and by the home."³ He noted that earlier temperance attempts had failed because leaders had been "fussy old men and jejune old men."⁴ Anti-prohibitionists, while certainly not sympathetic with the Iowa union, were impressed by their power. An anti-amendment speaker in Waterloo expressed fear that the women were going to "sing the Amendment into the constitution."⁵ The editor of the German-language Staats

¹ Gilman M. Ostrander, The Prohibition Movement in California, 1848-1933 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), p. 58.

² Sellers, op. cit., p. 54.

³ Register, January 29, 1882.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., May 23, 1882.

Anzieger in assessing the strength of prohibitionists wrote: "our opponents have an army of well-organized women under the leadership of puritanical parsons¹ who with sabbath hymns and frightening flags drive away the unstable men from the ballot boxes."² Brewers' harangues tended to reflect anxiety over the W. C. T. U.'s influence. Describing the women as an "idle, irresponsible, non-tax-paying, vicious element of society" they charged that the W. C. T. U. was waging "intolerant warfare."³

The women, comparing themselves with Americans during the revolution against Britain, overcame the epithets and continued their holy crusade. A speaker at the third convention of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa counseled her confederates: "many of us feel keenly the slurs . . . but we must remember that all they who first advocate a reform are buffeted and scoffed at."⁴ The W. C. T. U. of Iowa adopted

¹In the original German, the author used the word pfaffen, an expression denoting contempt, extreme and rigid religiosity, to identify the prohibitionist clergy.

²(Des Moines) Staats Anzieger, February 17, 1882.

³Proceedings of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Iowa [Sixth Annual Convention] (Burlington: Acres, Blackmar and Company, Printers, 1880), p. 31.

⁴Proceedings of the Woman's Christian Temperance League of Iowa [Third Annual Convention] (Cedar Rapids: A. J. Mallahan, Book and Job Printer, 1883), p. 41.

a position and used arguments directly paralleling those of both secular and non-secular radical prohibitionists. They believed that alcohol caused pauperism, crime, divorce, and waste.¹ W. C. T. U. speakers proposed that if the manufacture, sale, and consumption of alcoholic beverages were declared illegal, the money annually expended for liquor would be diverted to such socially redeeming actions as constructing universities in each state, building schools and meeting houses, paying teachers' salaries, and liquidating the national debt.² The vehicle for attaining their temperance euphoria was the proposed amendment to the constitution which was first publicly advocated at the state W. C. T. U. convention in 1878.

The W. C. T. U. of Iowa was organized at a Cedar Rapids convention held in November 1874. Thirty-five delegates from nineteen societies were present. After selecting their officers, including Mrs. E. A. Wheeler of Cedar Rapids as president and Mrs. J. E. Foster of Clinton as corresponding secretary, the convention appointed three delegates to

¹Proceedings of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Iowa (Fifth Annual Convention) (Iowa City: Brant, Katzenmeyer and Armentrout, Printers, 1878), pp. 39-43.

²Third Annual Convention of W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., p. 60.

attend the national W. C. T. U. convention.¹ By 1876, the number of societies had grown to thirty-five with a total membership of over one thousand.² On the eve of the prohibition referendum the union claimed 157 unions and a membership of over three thousand.³

The growth in membership and influence of the Iowa W. C. T. U. was attributed to three factors: a rational and political leadership, a competent economic base, and a well-organized plan of attack. An important leader of the Iowa chapter who personified its quality of leadership was Judith Ellen Foster who was corresponding secretary of the first W. C. T. U., superintendent of legislation, and a national vice president. Born in Massachusetts, she attended Genesee Wesleyan Seminary in New York and later taught school. After moving to Chicago in order to work in local missions, she met and married E. C. Foster, a Clinton, Iowa lawyer. In Clinton she studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1872. Her interest in the anti-liquor crusade was evident in her early cases as a lawyer. She represented several

¹ Proceedings of the Woman's Christian Temperance League of Iowa [First Annual Convention] (Cedar Rapids: A. J. Mallahan, Book and Job Printer, 1883), p. 6.

² Third Annual Convention of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., p. 44.

³ Ninth Annual Session of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Iowa (Des Moines: Capital Publishing Company, 1882), p. 44.

women in damage suits against saloons. In 1874 she helped organize the Ladies Temperance Aid Society of Clinton which petitioned the city council to close all saloons in the city and worked for the enforcement of existing laws regulating the use of alcoholic beverages. Noted as an able lecturer, she spoke on temperance in various churches in and around Clinton. She attended the first state convention of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, where she was elected corresponding secretary and was appointed one of three Iowa delegates to attend the national convention of the W. C. T. U.

At the national convention she became a close friend of Frances E. Willard, head of the national organization, and was appointed superintendent of the department of legislation of the national union. As superintendent of the department of legislation of the Iowa W. C. T. U., a position she held during the late 1870s and early 1880s, Mrs. Foster advocated the proposed prohibition amendment at the 1878 convention of the Iowa union and directed the state union's work in attaining the amendment's passage. Throughout the 1870s and early 1880s, Mrs. Foster insisted that the state union remain non-partisan, even though she was a prominent Republican and there were important elements in the state union pressuring for affiliation with the state Republican party. In 1884, after ruptures in both the State Temperance Alliance and the Iowa W. C. T. U. over the issue

of nonpartisanship, Mrs. Foster was selected president of the non-partisan faction.

During the late 1880s and 1890s, her interests turned to national politics. In 1888 she organized and was the first president of the Woman's National Republican Association. In the following decade, her husband moved to Washington, D. C. to take a job in the United States Treasury Department. Mrs. Foster served on several presidential commissions. McKinley appointed her to inspect sanitation in soldier's barracks during the Spanish-American War; she was a member of the Taft Commission to the Philippines in 1900 and a representative of the United States delegation to the International Red Cross Conference at St. Petersburg in 1902. During Roosevelt's administration she was appointed to study child labor conditions and to inspect federal and state prisons for conditions of women prisoners.¹

J. E. Foster's leadership molded the Iowa W. C. T. U. into an effective legislative lobby group. She was the major force which guided the W. C. T. U. along a nonpartisan road. Through her efforts, the Iowa union attracted members from both the Republican and Greenback parties, as well as a few dry Democrats.

¹David C. Mott, "Judith Ellen Foster," Annals of Iowa, Third Series, XIX (October, 1933), 127-38.

The Iowa W. C. T. U. was further strengthened by an adequate economic base and fund-raising machinery. By 1878 the organization had an annual budget of \$1,300. Half of this came from the dues of local unions and children's auxiliaries. The remainder was raised by a professional financial agent. Mrs. A. M. Palmer had been hired in 1875 to travel through the state and raise money. In 1875 she collected over \$900; she retained \$100 for her traveling expenses and \$30 for her percentage and returned \$650 to the state union treasury.¹ The contributions of the financial agent represented a large proportion of the union's annual budget until the Iowa W. C. T. U. attained its maximum membership during the amendment campaign and collected over \$3,000 in dues from its auxiliary and juvenile chapters.² The financial security of the Iowa union allowed it to hire a full-time agent, temporary clerks, and pay the expenses of its executive board meetings, as well as pay partial expenses of its delegates to national conventions and open a lobbying headquarters in Des Moines when the general assemblies were in session. The budget also afforded regular expenditures for printing and postage in order to distribute to local

¹ Third Annual Convention of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., p. 22.

² Eighth Annual Session of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Iowa (Des Moines: State Journal Printing and Publishing House, 1881), p. 25.

chapters leaflets and information to aid their crusade.¹

The approach of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa superficially seemed to be saccharin and emotional. A speaker at the third convention of the Iowa union illustrated this style when she forecast the defeat of alcohol:

I see a rainbow of promise, stretching over this fair land, and in it letters of golden light, "Oh, woman! great is thy faith; be it unto thee ever as thou wilt." I know that the Red sea of rum--red with the blood of the slain--yawns at our feet, and the liquor hosts of King Alcohol are passing up in the rear; but I hear a voice, the voice of God, saying "Speak unto the women of America, that they GO FORWARD." If we will, I feel assured that the Red Sea will divide, and we shall² go over unto the promised land of Prohibition.

The supercilious image of the women crusaders in the above speech, while often mocked by anti-prohibitionists, was not truly representative of the actual crusade. Beneath the veneer of flowers, poetry, and psalm-singing was a well-organized political and propaganda machine that unified numerous temperance organizations and carried the crusade to every part of the state. The tactics of the W. C. T. U. included converting the young, propagandizing temperance, and establishing mechanisms designed to influence citizens and politicians.

¹ Third Annual Convention of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., p. 22; Eighth Annual Session of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

² Third Annual Convention of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

A major concern of the women was their juvenile work. Mrs. M. F. Goode, State Superintendent of W. C. T. U.

Juvenile Work, declared at the 1879 state convention:

Save the children, and the nation is saved. . . . My work sisters, is not among the oaks, or the giant trees, whose roots strike away down deep into the earth, and on whose trunks the poison ivy clings, but I come from the fields, the fresh green fields, where the fragrance of the clover, lily, violet and sweet forget-me-not, whose faces are up-turned to heaven drinking the dew and basking in God's sunshine, greet you on your right hand and on your left; I bring to you, and place on this temperance altar a bouquet [sic.] of the dear girls and boys of Iowa. . . . The work of death is going on every day, snatching new victims--our homes are exposed. . . .¹

The W. C. T. U. had numerous children's organizations including the Bands of Hope, the Cold Water Armies, Juvenile Unions, Boys' Clubs, Cadets, Bands of Help, and Young Peoples' Societies.² The Bands of Hope were the most numerous; by 1879 there were over fifty such organizations in the state, and by 1882 sixty-four with a membership of over six thousand.³ The children were encouraged to pay token dues and take three pledges. The first pledge, entitled the "Cold Water Band," required the pledgee to abstain from all intoxicating liquors. The second pledge,

¹Sixth Annual Convention of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., pp. 28-29.

²Ibid., p. 29.

³Ninth Annual Session of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., p. 44.

raising the pledger to a second grade of honor, required the abstinence from liquor and tobacco, while the third pledge, raising the participant to the highest grade of honor, required abstinence of liquor, tobacco, and profanity.¹

In order to save more children, the W. C. T. U. tried to coerce schools to teach prohibitionist principles. A speaker at the union convention expressed the concern of the crusading ladies over the school curriculum in the state:

. . . we suggest to thoughtful people everywhere, that it is not enough to say "our public school system must be preserved," that "it is the bulwark of our free government," that "only an educated citizenship can maintain such a government." This is not enough; we must know what these schools teach, and what they refuse to teach. We would rather children were taught the laws of morality, the laws of health, and the laws of political economy, than algebra, astronomy and logic. Drive the Bible from our schools, refuse to give admission to any teachings that elucidate the temperance problem, and even an educated citizenship will not maintain a Republican form of government.²

The state unit pressured the executive committee of the State Teachers' Association to introduce textbooks on alcohol and encouraged local unions to petition school

¹ Proceedings of the Woman's Christian Temperance League of Iowa (Second Annual Convention) (Cedar Rapids: A. J. Mallahan, Book and Job Printer, 1883). pp. 35-36.

² Seventh Annual Session of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Iowa (Des Moines: The Prohibitionist Letter Print, 1881), p. 16.

boards to adopt similar materials.¹ They encouraged normal schools to instruct future teachers in prohibition education and suggested that employers require total abstinence of their employees.²

The W. C. T. U. of Iowa effectively propagandized its program in religious and secular spheres of Iowa. Representatives of the W. C. T. U. spoke to regional and state conventions of Protestant denominations, as well as sent circular letters to Presbyterian, Methodist, United Brethren, and Christian congregations.³ The evangelistic tactic of the Iowa union was to influence churches to hold temperance prayer meetings four times each year, hold weekly prayer meetings in which local W. C. T. U. members could publicly pray for their cause, incorporate temperance lessons in Sabbath-school curricula, and encourage ministers to deliver

¹Fifth Annual Convention of the Iowa W. C. T. U., op. cit., p. 16; Seventh Annual Session of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., p. 16.

²Eighth Annual Session of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., pp. 31-32.

³Proceedings of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Iowa [Fourth Annual Convention] (Iowa City: Brant and Katzenmeyer, Printers, 1878), pp. 9-12; Eighth Annual Session of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., pp. 52-53; Proceedings of the Second Iowa Methodist Convention (Burlington: Acres, Blackmar and Company 1881), pp. 153-54.

prohibitionist sermons.¹

In secular arenas, union members visited prisons and alms-houses in order to conduct temperance meetings, held quarterly tea meetings and lawn parties, and gave lunches at polling places on election days in order to solicit temperance pledges, raise money, and distribute literature.²

Another tactic was to mass about saloon entrances singing and praying for the souls of the men inside. Such crusades were designed to embarrass businessmen and customers to abandon their liquor traffic. In Vinton, Iowa the zealous ladies crusaded to prevent stores from being rented to liquor dealers and influenced the local law officers to enforce a local law by raiding an establishment and emptying whiskey into the street.³ In order to convert Germanic populations which tended as a group to abhor prohibition, the state union created a "Special Committee for the German Language" which translated and published pro-amendment literature for distribution in German communities.⁴

Recognizing that the saloons had cultural and

¹ Eighth Annual Session of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., pp. 52-53.

² Ibid.

³ Annie Wittenmyer, History of the Woman's Temperance Crusade (Washington: James H. Earle, 1882), pp. 668-83.

⁴ Seventh Annual Session of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., p. 57.

recreational purposes besides vending liquor, local unions established reading rooms as substitutes in a few cities. The Clinton chapter was the first to found a reading room. Using money raised from small donations, a rented shop was equipped with books, tracts and newspapers espousing temperance. Occasionally the women performed musical and literary entertainments to enliven the library. Other rooms were opened in the Marshalltown railroad depot and in a Des Moines store.¹

A major activity of the W. C. T. U. was in pressuring the Iowa General Assembly to pass the proposed constitutional amendment and in campaigning for adoption of the amendment in the 1882 referendum. J. Ellen Foster reported to the convention their role in lobbying the General Assembly. She praised the women for their efforts in delivering petitions containing over 50,000 signatures (one-half of which were those of men) to the assembly. She noted that when debate on the amendment began on the Senate floor, W. C. T. U. chapters had sent large bouquets of flowers with such notes as:

May the father who gives to these flowers their beauty and fragrance, and to man the power to do a noble deed, guide the Senate of the state of Iowa to do by their votes that which shall live

¹Fourth Annual Convention of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa,
op. cit., pp. 19-20.

long after these flowers shall have faded.¹

She outlined an additional legislative program in which the ladies were to circulate local questionnaires which would report to the General Assembly a favorable popular attitude toward the amendment. Local units were requested to hire writers to prepare articles about legal prohibition and to influence church conventions officially to support the amendment.² During the amendment campaign the W. C. T. U. supplied speakers to organizations desiring information about the benefits of the proposed amendment and arranged for Frances Willard, leader of the national W. C. T. U., to speak in Des Moines along with "Steamboat Frank," a noted Modoc Indian and Quaker minister.³

W. C. T. U. efforts were not limited to prohibition. At the 1878, 1879 and 1880 conventions, the ladies discussed the problems of "fallen women." In 1880 the union voted to establish a home for fallen women in Des Moines to be supported in part by W. C. T. U. dues.⁴ The Iowa union also endorsed efforts to prohibit the use of tobacco, praised the efforts of Anthony Comstock to censor printed material, and campaigned to establish separate penal institutions for

¹Seventh Annual Session of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa,
op. cit., p. 5.

²Ibid., pp. 31-37.

³Register, June 13, 1882.

⁴Eighth Annual Session of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa,
op. cit., pp. 44-45.

women.¹ Another major concern was women suffrage. Suffrage resolutions had appeared in convention minutes as early as 1879.² From 1879 to 1883, the union tried to associate the success of prohibition with women suffrage by asserting that women would not only vote for initial prohibitionist legislation, but would also support candidates who pledged enforcement of anti-liquor laws.³ In 1883, the state union established a new department on women suffrage and instructed its membership to "proceed cautiously" on the question.⁴ However, during the first decade of W. C. T. U. activity, Iowa union support of women suffrage was covert and secondary to their prohibitionist activities. Separate suffrage organizations, often including W. C. T. U. members, existed in Iowa during the period and influenced the introduction of suffrage resolutions in the general assemblies.

The effective activism of the W. C. T. U. did not obscure internal organizational difficulties. While the executive committee developed strategies by which feminine

¹ Sixth Annual Convention of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., pp. 43-44; Tenth Annual Meeting of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Iowa (Cedar Rapids: A. J. Mallahan, Printer and Binder, 1883), pp. 37-38.

² Sixth Annual Convention of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., p. 44.

³ Register, July 22, 1881.

⁴ Tenth Annual Meeting of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., Appendix, pp. 15-16.

crusaders could activate major social, political, religious, and educational institutions behind prohibitionist reform and sent detailed instructions to local chapters, many local chapters remained apathetic or acted autonomously. Recurrent in annual convention minutes were admonitions of local chapters for failing to submit reports, not sending portions of dues to the state unit, or not carrying out executive suggestions.¹ The deterioration of local support of the state body increased after the success of the 1882 referendum when local units lost members and dues declined.²

Although the Iowa W. C. T. U. often acted as a force which unified activities of temperance organizations, especially those of religiously-affiliated groups, the official prohibitionist conjunctive was the Iowa State Temperance Alliance which attempted to correlate and integrate numerous temperance group efforts. Established at Clear Lake in 1876 by representatives of important temperance agencies, its articles of incorporation defined the purpose of the group to promote the cause of temperance in Iowa without allying itself to any sect or political party.³

¹Fourth Annual Convention of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., pp. 9-12; Sixth Annual Session of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., pp. 12-16; Tenth Annual Meeting of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., pp. 47-48.

²Tenth Annual Meeting of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

³D. E. Clark, op. cit., p. 366.

An early historian of Iowa temperance declared that the alliance was successful in uniting scattered forces of temperance without destroying the identity of member groups.¹

Despite the cooperation and efforts of the alliance, there were minor disagreements and petty squabbles among temperance societies. The W. C. T. U. was concerned about maintaining its separate identity and cautioned its membership in 1878: "Our Unions should be kept separate from all others; and, while we can work harmoniously with all, we should keep our own organizations."² The antipathy between radical prohibitionists and the apolitical Blue Ribbon Movement was often overt. Prohibitionists also disagreed about the "Des Moines Idea" interpretation of the proposed constitutional amendment which would have allowed manufacture of alcohol if it were shipped out of the state.³

Antagonisms between temperance groups appeared to be minor. Most societies were unified in their mutual goals to incorporate prohibition into the state constitution and ensure enforcement of prohibition by legal agencies throughout the state. Thus, prohibitionist pressure groups acted as viable elements in arousing support for prohibition during the early 1880s.

¹ Ibid., p. 367.

² Fifth Annual Convention of the W. C. T. U. of Iowa, op. cit., p. 13.

³ Register, February 21, 1882.

CHAPTER V

ECONOMIC AND ETHNIC SOURCES OF PROHIBITION

Prohibitionist and opponent rhetoric about the proposed amendment to the Iowa constitution exhibited universal rather than parochial qualities. Prohibitionists argued that the amendment would halt the traffic of a product which destroyed lives, condemned sinners to hell, disrupted families, deprived children of nourishment and clothing as well as induced crime and violence. On the other hand, anti-prohibitionists earnestly charged that prohibition laws represented moral conscription and deprived citizens of their "personal liberty." Each group claimed that its position would advance the state economy; each argued that its side represented divine will.

In order to gain support, both groups also organized throughout the state. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the State Amendment Association had chapters in each county of the state. Likewise, the brewers organized their supporters wherever liquor was manufactured or sold. The result of the campaign was a 55.3 per cent majority in favor of the amendment at the referendum held on June 27, 1882. However, the proportional majority vote was not equally distributed throughout the state. Support ranged from a maximum of 88.1 per cent to a minimum of 16.3 per

cent. Neither the efforts of pressure groups nor the distribution of religious denominations fully explains the inconsistent vote. Instead, support and non-support of the amendment tended to exist according to a matrix of economic, geographic, demographic, and ethnic factors.

The vote for the amendment was divided along geographic lines. Most counties along the Mississippi river and a few on the Missouri river delivered large majorities against the proposed amendment, while interior counties tended to vote for it. Eight of the ten counties most opposed to prohibition were river counties, their votes against the amendment ranging from 83.7 per cent to 59.4 per cent against the amendment; both Dubuque and Scott counties which voted four to one against prohibition were located on the Mississippi river. On the other hand, the ten counties which gave the largest majorities to the proposed amendment, ranging from 88.1 per cent to 74.1 per cent, were all located in the interior of the state. The two counties over-whelmingly supporting prohibition with majorities of over 80 per cent, Emmet and Winnebago, were both located along the central northwestern border of the state.

The counties which supported prohibition tended to be in areas of the state newly opened to settlement. Emmet, Winnebago, and Dickinson counties which voted most strongly for prohibition were all part of the Sioux Cession of 1851, the last Iowa land ceded by American Indians. Neither

county had more than two-hundred permanent settlers by 1860. Fifteen years prior to the prohibition referendum, inhabitants of the counties still sustained their living by hunting, trapping, or holding township or county offices.¹

Cherokee, Buena Vista and Calhoun counties, also among the ten counties which most strongly supported prohibition, were part of (or near) the Sioux Cession and were not settled until the mid-1850s.² Story county although located in the center of the state was not organized until 1857.³ Clarke and Ringgold in south central Iowa, although open in the 1840s, sustained very slow growth rates. As late as 1854, Ringgold had only 128 inhabitants, while Clarke, settled by stragglers from the Mormon migration in 1847, had only 4,000

¹ History of Kossuth, Hancock and Winnebago Counties, Iowa (Springfield: Union Publishing Company, 1884), pp. 736-67; History of Emmet County and Dickinson County, Iowa: A Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement (Chicago: Pioneer Publishing Company, 1917), I, 80-84, 247-59.

² Thomas McCulla, History of Cherokee County, Iowa (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1914), p. 253; C. H. Wegersler and Thomas Walpole, Past and Present of Buena Vista County, Iowa (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1909), pp. 37, 48; Past and Present of Calhoun County, Iowa (Chicago: Pioneer Publishing Company, 1915), pp. 73, 315.

³ William Allen, A History of Story County, Iowa (Des Moines: Iowa Printing Company, 1887), pp. 301-13.

settlers a decade later.¹ Appanoose, further east of Ringgold county, was the earliest settled county of the ten; it was opened to settlers in 1842.²

Anti-prohibitionist counties were organized much earlier than the dry counties. Six of the ten counties voting strongly against the amendment were located in the Black Hawk Purchase of 1832 which opened Iowa to permanent settlement. Johnson county was opened by the Second Black Hawk Purchase of 1837; Allamakee was opened by the Winnebago Cession of 1848, and Wapello was part of the Sauk and Fox Cession of 1842.³ Consequently, nine of the counties were settled during the 1830s and 1840s.

Although anti-prohibitionist counties had been settled two decades earlier than the prohibitionist units, age was not the delineating factor. Louisa county although part of the initial territory opened by the first Black Hawk Purchase voted 65.9 per cent in favor of the proposed amendment. Moreover, Plymouth county which voted 61.3 per cent

¹ Biographical and Historical Record of Ringgold County, Iowa (n. p.: n. pub., 1887), p. 447; Biographical and Historical Record of Clarke County, Iowa (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1886), pp. 449-57, 513.

² The History of Appanoose County, Iowa (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1878), p. 57.

³ A. T. Andreas, A. T. Andreas' Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa (Chicago: Andreas Atlas Company, 1875), pp. 423-24, 426, 443, 541, 546, 446, 476, 484, 506.

against the amendment was not settled until 1856. A more significant factor which influenced the leaning of a county toward prohibition than decade of settlement was population density. As Table II demonstrates, the larger the population of the county, the greater its anti-prohibitionist sentiment. Thus, Louisa county with an 1885 population of 11,926 was well-below in population both its anti-prohibitionist neighbors and the counties which tended to cluster about the state mean vote on the amendment. However, the size of county populations was merely indicative of the economic and urban development of the counties. The data of Table III illustrates that anti-prohibitionist counties were more urban and affluent than counties which voted for the amendment. Urban property was collectively worth more than seven times that of prohibitionist counties. Furthermore, anti-amendment counties exceeded dry counterparts by three times in personalty and one-third in railroad property. The statistics for mean counties demonstrate that urban wealth and population statistical disparities between prohibitionist and opponent counties were not coincidental. The tendency of the mean counties to have significantly less wealth and smaller populations than anti-prohibitionist counties and more urban wealth and people than prohibitionist counties reveals the trend that as the population and value of personalty, town lots, and railroad property decreased,

TABLE II
VOTE FOR AMENDMENT AND AVERAGE POPULATION
OF SELECTED COUNTIES⁴

	State	Prohib. ¹	Mean ²	Anti-Prohib. ³
Average vote for amendment	55.3%	78.5%	54.8%	34.6%
Average population	17,716	9,369	17,380	28,956

¹The ten counties voting most strongly for the prohibition amendment were Emmet (88.1%), Winnebago (86.1%), Dickinson (78.6%), Clarke (78.1%), Story (77.6%), Cherokee (76.6%), Buena Vista (76.5%), Appanoose (74.9%), Ringgold (74.2%), and Calhoun (74.1%).

²The ten counties clustering about the state mean vote for the amendment (55.3%) were Marion (57.3%), Grundy (57.2%), Washington (56.7%), Chickasaw (56.4%), Harrison (56.1%), Webster (54.3%), Decatur (54.1%), Kossuth (53.0%), Shelby (51.6%), and Benton (51.3%).

³The ten counties voting most strongly against the amendment were Dubuque (16.3%), Scott (22.0%), Des Moines County (34.4%), Wapello (37.0%), Clayton (38.1%), Plymouth (38.7%), Allamakee (38.9%), Lee (39.2%), Johnson (40.4%), and Jackson (40.6%).

⁴The same counties classified as "prohibitionist," "anti-prohibitionist," and "mean" are used in all subsequent tables in this chapter.

SOURCE: Frank D. Jackson, Secretary of State, Census of Iowa for the Year 1885 (Des Moines: George E. Roberts, State Printer, 1885), pp. 167-69, 611-59.

TABLE III
VALUE OF LAND AND PERSONALTY IN
SELECTED IOWA COUNTIES

	State	Prohib.	Mean	Anti- Prohib.
Avg. value of farm	\$ - -	\$ 5,359	\$ 4,489	\$ 5,259
Value per acre	- -	6.05	7.67	9.45
Value of town lots	726,187*	244,235	452,171	1,872,196
Value of personalty	1,044,170*	581,760	1,057,331	1,712,614
Value of rr. property	319,922*	213,453	313,477	372,804

*This figure computed on basis of total state figures divided by the number of counties in Iowa in 1885 (ninety-nine).

SOURCE: F. Jackson, op. cit., pp. 240-48, 262-64, 611-59.

support for prohibition increased.

Obviously with larger and older settlements, anti-prohibitionist counties had more valuable and complex economies. The data in Table IV indicates that anti-prohibitionist counties had three-times more manufacturing establishments than the state average, and more than ten times that of the prohibitionist counties. The value of manufacturing capital and the value of production followed similar trends. Prohibitionist counties usually had industries which serviced agrarian needs. Most of the ten prohibitionist counties had flour and grist mills, and creameries; about one-half had saddlery and harness establishments, blacksmiths and wagon manufacturers. None of the counties had distilleries.¹ Anti-prohibitionist counties, on the other hand, not only had large flour and grist mills and creameries, but most of the industries surveyed in the Iowa census of 1885, including foundries, manufacturers of agricultural implements, shoes, bricks, carriages, clothing, furniture, sheet metal, lumber, as well as canneries, pork-packing plants, saw mills, and saddleries. Eight of the ten counties had distilleries with the two largest, each producing \$250,000 worth of liquor annually, located in Dubuque

¹ Frank D. Jackson, Secretary of State, Census of Iowa for the Year 1885 (Des Moines: George E. Roberts, State Printer, 1885), pp. 244-48.

TABLE IV
EXTENT OF MANUFACTURING IN
SELECTED IOWA COUNTIES

	State	Prohib.	Mean	Anti- Prohib.
No. of manufac. est.	28	10	19	106
Total manuf. capital	\$227,516*	\$20,450	\$ 40,175	\$ 774,805
Value of products	\$710,662*	\$62,703	\$205,216	\$3,438,380

*This figure computed on basis of total state figures divided by the number of counties in Iowa in 1885 (ninety-nine).

SOURCE: Jackson, op. cit., pp. 244-48.

and Scott counties.¹ Hence, the economies of anti-prohibitionist counties served both rural and urban needs.

The industrialization of the mean counties demonstrated that as the level of complexity of the economies diminished, the prohibitionist vote increased. Mean counties tended to have twice as much manufacturing capital and establishments as the strong prohibitionist counties. On the other hand, the mean counties were far below the anti-prohibitionist counties in economic development.

Although statistical analysis indicates that the prohibitionist counties tended to be rural, with low population densities and primitive economies, while anti-prohibitionist counties had large urban centers, relatively high population densities and complex economies, exceptions are evident. The Iowa State Register in analyzing the referendum vote noted that all the cities rejected the amendment except two, Des Moines and Cedar Rapids.² Des Moines and Polk county cast 4,630 for the amendment and 2,519 against. Cedar Rapids voted 1,425 for and 1,106 against, while Linn county voted 3,009 for and 1,925 against.³ Conversely, Iowa City, located a few miles south of Cedar Rapids, cast 411 votes

¹ Ibid.

² (Des Moines) Iowa State Register, June 28, 1882 [hereinafter referred to as Register].

³ Jackson, op. cit., p. 639.

for the amendment and almost 900 against.¹

The exceptions demonstrated that size and economic development were not the sole factors influencing the position of counties toward prohibition. An additional factor, often mentioned by contemporaries, was ethnic or cultural predispositions. Even though Polk and Linn counties shared such qualities as large populations and complex economies with anti-prohibitionist counterparts, their populations were ethnically dissimilar in composition. The data in Table V presenting the ethnic compositional percentages for Polk, Linn, and the ten strongly anti-prohibitionist counties indicates that Polk and Linn had larger native-American populations and significantly smaller German and Irish communities than anti-prohibitionist counties. Table VI demonstrates that the ethnic differences between anti-prohibitionist counties and Polk and Linn were also true for mean and strongly prohibitionist counties. Although Iowa was predominately settled by native-Americans with 82.3 per cent of the population born in the United States, anti-prohibitionist counties had larger immigrant populations. Three immigrant groups tended to influence the leanings of counties on the temperance question. Scandinavians, including Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes, were found in larger proportions in counties supporting prohibition

¹Ibid., p. 636.

TABLE V

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF POLK AND LINN COUNTIES
 COMPARED WITH ANTI PROHIBITIONIST COUNTIES

National origin	Polk	Linn	Anti-Prohib.
Native born	84.0%	84.2%	75.5%
Foreign born	16.0	15.8	23.5

England	2.1	1.1	1.4
Ireland	2.9	2.2	3.8
Germany	3.6	2.4	11.7
Denmark	0.3	0.3	scant
Sweden	3.0	0.3	1.1
Norway	0.8	scant	0.9
Canada	scant	1.0	scant

SOURCE: F. Jackson, op. cit., pp.167-69, 611-59.

TABLE VI
POPULATION COMPOSITION OF SELECTED
IOWA COUNTIES

National origin	State	Prohib.	Mean	Anti-Prohib.
Native born	82.3%	82.7%	82.6%	75.5%
Foreign born	17.7	17.3	17.4	23.5

England	1.4	1.3	1.0	1.4
Ireland	2.4	1.2	1.8	3.8
Germany	6.9	2.4	6.8	11.7
Denmark	0.7	0.9	scant	scant
Sweden	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.1
Norway	1.3	6.0	1.0	0.9
Canada	1.0	0.8	scant	scant

SOURCE: F. Jackson, op. cit., pp. 167-69, 611-59.

than in counties voting against it. Conversely, Irish and German immigrants were disproportionately found in anti-prohibitionist counties.

An examination of two immigrant groups which as blocs tended to support opposing sides of the prohibition amendment will suffice to illustrate the impact of immigrant votes upon Iowa prohibition. Norwegians made up a significant part of the population in the two counties which overwhelmingly supported the amendment. In Emmet county, which voted 88.1 per cent for the amendment, 13.5 per cent of the settlers were from Norway, while 30.1 per cent of the inhabitants were Norwegian in Winnebago county, which cast 86.1 per cent for the amendment. In Winnebago county, Center and Forest townships, which included the county seat, were the center of native-American settlers, while Norwegians lived throughout the remainder of the county in rural villages and on family farms.¹ In the referendum, voters in Center and Forest townships supported the amendment by votes of 145 to 46 and 157 to 40, but in the remainder of the county only three negative votes were cast.²

The Norwegians had not always supported prohibition. Norwegians who had migrated to the United States in the

¹ Laurence M. Larson, The Changing West (Northfield, Minnesota: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1937), pp. 39-41.

² Jackson, op. cit., p. 658.

1840s enjoyed social drinking and readily patronized stores and saloons. Drinking was part of their annual celebrations and accompanied weddings, baptisms and funerals. In mixed Scandinavian communities, Norwegians were likely to have been the local saloonkeepers.¹ However, during the 1850s, the Norwegian temperance movement began and eventually overtook the Norwegian-American communities.

Two theories have been proposed to explain the Norwegian temperance tendencies. Theodore Blegen suggested that there was a pervasive puritanism in Norwegian culture which tended to grow as Norwegian settlements aged. He noted the extreme pietism of the Hauge synod which prohibited drinking, theatre, dancing, card playing, and display of dress.² Paul Kleppner suggested that the Norwegians in their mother country were accustomed to low levels of mobility and lived in isolated rural conclaves in which community values were rigidly reinforced. When the Norwegians migrated to the United States they could not adapt to the fluid social mobility and the Americanization forces which threatened to disrupt their values and traditional way of life. Therefore, they joined with native evangelicals

¹ Theodore C. Blegen, Norwegian Migration to America: The American Transition (2 vols; Northfield, Minnesota: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1940), II, 204-06.

² Ibid., II, 221-22.

against the Democratic "Catholic party," intemperance, and inappropriate behavior on the sabbath in an attempt to destroy dynamic forces in American society and codify a rigid value system.¹

German-Americans, a much larger ethnic group in Iowa than the Norwegians, tended to oppose prohibition. One-third of the 120,000 Germans in Iowa were settled in the ten counties which voted most strongly against the amendment. Thus, while representing only 6.9 per cent of the Iowa population in 1882, Germans comprised 11.7 per cent of the people in anti-prohibitionist counties. In Dubuque and Scott counties, the two counties which delivered the largest anti-prohibitionist votes, first generation Germans represented 15.0 and 25.6 per cent of their populations. On the other hand, German-Americans comprised less than three per cent of the populations of prohibitionist counties.

The German antipathy toward prohibition was widely known in Iowa during the prohibitionist campaign. The owner of the Denison Review who maintained a pro-amendment editorial policy, also operated a German-language edition which officially was against prohibition.² Germans wrote

¹Paul Kleppner, The Cross of Culture: A Social Analysis of Midwestern Politics, 1850-1900 (New York: Free Press, 1970), pp. 87-88.

²(Des Moines) Staats Anzeiger, April 7, 1882 [hereinafter referred to as Staats Anzeiger].

numerous letters to local newspapers describing and reaffirming their almost unanimous condemnation of prohibition. When dry newspapers reported that German Methodists and Evangelicals were supporting the amendment, prominent Germans argued that their position had been misrepresented or the congregations would not follow the over-zealous prohibitionist religious leadership.¹ The few Germans who openly supported prohibition were castigated by the German press. The Des Moines Democratic German-language newspaper, the Staats Anzeiger, condemned one such temperance advocate and suggested that, "His fellow Germans in Charles City should slap his hand for writing such a letter to the Des Moines Register."²

Factors influencing the overwhelming German opposition to prohibition were cultural and economic. The Staats Anzeiger summarized the motivations in noting that Germans believed that the proposed prohibitory amendment would "confiscate their property and refuse them a glass of beer."³

An obvious factor was the status of beer-drinking in the German communities. The consumption of beer in congenial surroundings was part of the German-American life style which linked the immigrants to the old country and rein-

¹ Register, April 30, 1882.

² Staats Anzeiger, June 9, 1882.

³ Ibid., April 14, 1882.

forced German folkways. A German anti-prohibitionist suggested the cultural linkage of beer drinking to German attitudes toward the amendment when he described the drinking as "one of the customs and habits of our fathers from whom we have acquired the same custom and habits."¹ Another German, in criticizing attacks of a prohibitionist upon beer gardens in Germany, characterized the immigrant attitude toward such quasi-institutions in Iowa:

In Germany everybody drinks and he [the prohibitionist] evidently saw the beer houses and summer gardens filled with people and all happy and gemüthlich: (but then he don't [sic.], he can't know what the word means) and seeing them happy and hilarious he imagined them drunk, and he calls that waste of vital power. Now it is true, the average workman in the field gets meat but once a week there, but did the Bishop ever see a more robust, healthy people than they are, or more temperate and less licentious?²

The economic disruption caused by prohibition was also a significant factor in turning Germans against prohibition. German-Americans were closely associated with the liquor traffic in the United States. Prohibitionists estimated that more than one-fourth of all saloonkeepers in Philadelphia were Germans during the 1870s, and Germans were the largest of the immigrant groups who dominated the United

¹ Burlington Gazette, June 5, 1882.

² Staats Anzeiger, July 15, 1888.

States liquor industry.¹ Although statistics were not compiled indicating German influence in the Iowa liquor trade, there were indications of considerable German activity. Anti-prohibitionist anecdotes circulating during the amendment campaign often focused on German saloonkeepers. One such story printed in the Delmar Clipper-Journal involved a German bartender's reaction to the behavior of members of the W. C. T. U. outside the entrance of his saloon:

Ven I goes to mine bed I sleeps not goot. I dream in mine head dat I hear dem vimmens braying and singing in mine ears dot Jesus loves me. Dot bothers me so I got right straight up and walk on the floor and take anudder glass of beer.²

The German influence in the Iowa liquor trade was also exemplified when the Iowa Brewers Association, holding its twenty-third annual convention in Des Moines during the campaign and including delegates from every city and a number of towns in the state, conducted all of its business in German.³ After the brewers were criticized by native newspapers for not using English at the convention, a German newspaper remarked that German was used because the "class of business men" understood "their mother tongue better than

¹ Annie Wittenmyer, History of the Woman's Temperance Crusade (Washington, D. C.: James H. Earle, 1882), pp. 772-73.

² David Mott, "J. Ellen Foster," Annals of Iowa, Third Series, XIX (October, 1933), 130.

³ Register, April 13, 1882.

English."¹ The influence of the economic factor on the German vote was also indicated by the unusual number of references in German-language newspapers to the four million dollars of property that would be destroyed if the amendment passed.

A third element unifying Germans against prohibitionists was the xenophobia apparent within the state and specifically in the temperance movement. The nativist behavior of Iowans as well as the sensitivity of Germans to such discrimination was exhibited in Burlington in 1881 when the German-language newspaper, the Tribune, criticized the Burlington Old Settlers' Reunion for not inviting Germans to their meeting, noting that the group had advertised its meeting in the two English-language newspapers in Burlington and "the two obscure country papers published in Danville and Mediapolis," but not in the German-language press. The article concluded that the exclusion of the German old settlers was obvious in that the association also banned what it described as "beer, wine and similar works of the devil."²

Prohibitionist intolerance was illustrated in a speech by Mrs. A. M. Palmer, financial agent of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Iowa. At the sixth state con-

¹ Staats Anzeiger, April 21, 1882.

² Quoted in the Burlington Gazette, August 30, 1881.

vention of the union, Mrs. Palmer cautioned members about the perverse influences of foreigners upon Iowa youth:

[Children] should be schooled in integrity, honesty, self-sacrifice and true loyalty, that they may be able to withstand the communism, liberalism, and kindred evils, which the influx of foreigners is bringing to our doors.¹

J. H. Bremmerman, corresponding secretary of the State Anti-Amendment Club of Iowa, deprecated prohibitionist nativism in describing the sermon of a Kossuth county minister:

[The minister charged] upon our foreign population the great mass of drunkenness, pauperism and crime which disfigure the face of our country. No exceptions were made, but many odious and offensive comparisons. . . . The use of the terms "mean," "contemptible," "pimp," "dirty," "filthy;" his violent attack on the Germans; his characterization of them as "political beggars;" his application of vile adjectives to their habits and mode of life; his extreme bitterness in singling them out as the great moving cause of crime and misery among us. . . .²

The specific bigoted attack which precipitated a strong German reaction during the last months of the amendment campaign and hurled into the campaign the expression "know-nothingism" as a major issue among German voters was an article in the Knoxville State Journal which attacked the brewers for using German at their state convention.

The convention was not only un-American it was anti-

¹ Proceedings of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Iowa [Sixth Annual Convention] (Burlington: Acres, Blackmar and Company, Printers, 1880), p. 30.

² Burlington Gazette, June 5, 1882.

American, alien in its principles, practices and purposes, it speaks the tongue of the alien. It is the Iowa wing of the army of the Goths and Vandals, whose business it is to destroy the civilization of America and substitute therefore the barbarism of the beer houses and communistic clubs of Hamburg. . . . They come from the pot-houses of vice to teach us purer morals; from the domain of despotism to teach us the first principles of liberty. . . .

Was the Magna Charta written in German? Was the Declaration of Independence written in German? Did the men who emptied the tea into Boston harbor take council in German? . . . Who submitted to the long years of war and grievous privation, that the principles of civil and religious liberty for which they or their fathers, had suffered expatriation, might be maintained and established?

. . . For many years German immigrants were of a character which deserves, and always receives a welcome. But for thirty five years we have been receiving the vile with the good. They have been introducing principles and customs repugnant to the American people, destructive of law, order and morality and ruinous to the family and the nation.¹

German-language newspapers responded to the State Journal article with vituperation. The editor of the Staats Anzeiger described the editor of the State Journal as a "slanderer of a race," a "lickspittle who would cringe his knees to the fanatical preachers" a "snarling, back-biting fiend."² The editor then solemnly announced that "know-nothingism" had been revived by prohibitionists:

. . . the prohibition movement was not designed to stop the use of stimulating beverages . . . but its

¹ Reprinted in the Staats Anzeiger, April 21, 1882.

² Ibid.

purpose is to subjugate the industrious, prosperous foreigners and to make them bow to the puritanical notions of their puritanical preachers.¹

German newspapers warned readers that bigotry was spreading over the nation and quoted papers in other states as evidence. The Staats Anzeiger reprinted an article from the Illinois Staatszeiterg which declared:

A spirit of hate--hate of the foreign is going through this land and through the Republican party. They won't be able to pull it off as easily with us Germans as the Russians did with the Jews. Our numbers are growing daily through immigration.²

In concluding its case for opposing the amendment the day before the referendum the editor of the Staats Anzeiger called for all immigrants, especially the Germans, to vote against prohibition because it was specifically directed against foreigners. The editor wrote in German:

It [the amendment] disputes the right of a foreign born person to live here as he wishes. It makes Germans and other foreign born people slaves and builds an aristocracy among the native born. It shores up and awakens hate of the foreign. It seeks to wipe out German customs and habits in order to force the citizen and practice a puritan suppressed life.³

The triad of forces, cultural, economic and fear of nativist oppression, operated during the Iowa amendment campaign to influence most German-Americans into actively work-

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid., June 9, 1882.

³ Ibid., June 23, 1882.

ing against prohibition and casting negative votes in the referendum. All German-language newspapers, even those affiliated with the Republican party, opposed the amendment and rebuked the Republicans for allowing it to be submitted to a referendum. Major anti-prohibitionist groups, especially the State Anti-Prohibition Club of Iowa, included prominent Germans on their executive boards.¹ Only small groups of Germans belonging to pietist churches supported the amendment, and these had no economic interests in the liquor trade and had weak ties with the state German population.²

The ethnic composition of counties tended to be a predictable factor in influencing the position of counties on the question of prohibition. No counties with large Norwegian or German populations voted opposite to the predispositions of the dominant immigrant group. A secondary element in determining the prohibitionist proclivity of a county was its urban character. Most counties with urban centers and developed economies and transportation systems opposed the amendment, while rural areas, especially those just emerging from a frontier state, were strongly prohibitionist. The ethnic and economic factors when considered with religious associations delineate discernible patterns of prohibitionist and anti-prohibitionist support.

¹Ibid., April 21, 1882.

²Ibid., June 9, 1882.

CHAPTER VI

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

The sources of prohibitionist strength in Iowa during the early 1880s permeated every aspect of the state's social, economic, and religious life. Arguments used by secular prohibitionists to justify and popularize their cause appealed both to practical and "scientific" frames of mind. Voters were urged to support prohibition because it would reduce their taxes, eliminate crime and poverty, maintain good health and induce longevity. In their arguments for the amendment, prohibitionists were forced to propound a progressive philosophy in which they decried laissez-faire and urged the government to take action in order to eliminate the evil saloon from Iowa society. The progressive theories, however, appeared to be narrow; prohibition was advocated as a panacea for all of Iowa's societal ills and was not associated with other major movements which promised to reform Iowa institutions.

Anti-prohibitionists also utilized pragmatic and "scientific" arguments in their condemnations of the proposed amendment. While the prohibitionists were forced to adopt a moderate progressive rationale to justify their attacks upon the status quo, the anti-prohibitionists in defending their property were required to use a philosophy which resembled late nineteenth century conservatism in that

they proclaimed the constitution to be a sacred document which would be destroyed by meddling and decried the prohibitionist restrictions on "personal liberty." Labels, however, must be attached with caution. Like the prohibitionists, those supporting the manufacture and sale of liquor were espousing doctrines only on the narrow subject of liquor restriction; their views upon other proposed reforms were not necessarily dictated as conservative by their position on the proposed amendment.

To transmit their arguments and activate sympathetic forces, both prohibitionists and the liquor-interests organized themselves into pressure groups. Prohibitionists utilized national organizations, such as the International Order of Good Templars and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, as well as special local groups established for the amendment crusade, such as various Reform Clubs and the state and local Amendment Clubs, to canvass the state for temperance support. Prohibitionist groups were sufficiently divergent to encompass heterogeneous interests and associations. Special associations and auxiliaries appealed to all ages, both sexes, and numerous religious denominations. Above the matrix of prohibitionist personnel was the conjunctive State Temperance Alliance which attempted to coordinate dry activities.

Anti-prohibitionists tended to use brewers' associations as the core of their strength. The State Brewers

Association appropriated from its members special dues for organizing a State Protective Association which was to fight the proposed amendment.¹ National groups were also consulted for information and economic aid.² Non-brewer affiliated groups were organized along the Mississippi river. Most prominent were the State Anti-Amendment Club of Iowa and the Anti-Prohibition League which had several hundred members each. These associations used tactics similar to those of the prohibitionist groups by employing speakers, holding mass meetings and planting articles in local newspapers.³

The arguments of both prohibitionists and their opponents appeared to have little direct influence in changing citizens' votes. An analysis of the referendum revealed that although the arguments used by both sides were universal in scope and were widely circulated throughout the state, the vote itself was sectional and inconsistent. Thus, variables other than the quality of debate by either side tended to be more significant.

A major determinant of midwestern behavior and thought in the late nineteenth century was the church.

¹ (Des Moines) Iowa State Register, January 20, 1881 [hereinafter referred to as Register].

² (Des Moines) Staats Anzeiger, May 28, 1882.

³ Burlington Hawkeye, January 4, 1882; Register, January 14, 1881.

Several Christian sects were active advocates and institutional conclaves for the prohibition amendment. Thus, it was not surprising that evangelical churches, especially the Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, and Disciples of Christ, which overtly supported prohibition had proportionally larger memberships in counties which voted for prohibition than in counties which rejected it. Conversely, more liturgical churches, like the Roman Catholic and Episcopalian churches, whose memberships generally did not support the amendments, were found in disproportionate strength in anti-prohibitionist counties.

Rural Iowa was also a prohibitionist source of strength during the amendment election. The strongest prohibitionist counties had small, rural populations and primitive economies which serviced agrarian needs. However, as the population density increased, along with industrialism, urbanization, and interstate transportation, the vote for prohibition proportionally declined.

Although the state was predominately native in that over 80 per cent of the population was born in the United States, immigrant groups did influence the prohibition vote in a few counties. Norwegians who as a group were strongly in favor of prohibition tended to dominate the two counties which cast the largest majorities for prohibition. Conversely, the Germans who were primarily settled in counties along the Mississippi river were effective anti-prohibition-

ist sources. Particularly critical to the German community was their contention that prohibition was inherently xenophobic and aimed at destroying German-American culture and individuality. This sensitivity to discrimination was extensively used by German newspapers in Iowa to unify German support behind anti-amendment banners.

The vehicle selected by prohibitionists to attain a dry utopia precipitated dissension within the state political parties and government. By proposing an amendment and enabling laws to enforce and define total prohibition in the state, prohibitionist sources were required to coalesce as a political movement in order to capture the Iowa general assembly, executive branch and, as a practical result, the political parties. Thus, the political parties operating in Iowa during the early 1880s, including the Greenback, Democrat, and Republican, were forced to come to grips with the prohibition question.

The Greenback party attempted to skirt the amendment issue. Established in 1876 as a reaction to the agricultural depression of the 1870s, the party's sources of strength were the western frontier counties. The party reached its peak in 1879 when its gubernatorial candidate received 15 per cent of the total vote cast.¹ The primary

¹Herman C. Nixon, "The Populist Movement in Iowa," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, XXIV (January, 1926), 20-24.

issues of the Greenbackers were railroad regulation, lowering governmental budgets, anti-monopoly, and establishment of a national greenback currency.¹

The party had strong prohibitionist sympathies within it. A major leader, James B. Weaver, had been an outspoken advocate of prohibition during the mid-1870s when he was a member of the Republican party. Sources of Greenback strength were also in rural counties which had a propensity to support the amendment. But the party managed officially to ignore the amendment question during the early 1880s. State platforms were silent on prohibition, and Greenback speakers did not take official stands.² As a result, the six Greenbackers in the nineteenth General Assembly House of Representatives were divided in their vote on the amendment. Four representatives supported the amendment, while one voted against it and one was absent.³

Two factors tended to keep the Greenbackers neutral. One was their tendency to fuse with the Democrats who overtly rejected prohibition during various elections.⁴

¹ Register, July 10, 1881.

² Ibid.

³ F. D. Reid, Manual of the State of Iowa of the Nineteenth General Assembly for the Year 1882 (Des Moines: State Journal Printing and Publishing House, 1882), pp. 182-85; Journal of the House of Representatives of the Nineteenth General Assembly of the State of Iowa (Des Moines: F. M. Mills, State Printer, 1882), p. 440.

⁴ Nixon, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

Another was a contemporary belief that the party itself was almost equally divided on the amendment. The editor of the Iowa State Register estimated that at least one-half of the Greenback supporters would not vote for the amendment.¹

The Democratic party, which in 1882 controlled twenty-two votes in the Iowa House of Representatives and two in the Senate, at first openly opposed prohibition and the amendment. At the Democratic state convention held in Des Moines in June 1881, party members greeted with "loud and derisive laughter" an appeal by the W. C. T. U. to support the amendment and adopted an anti-prohibition plank in their platform: "That we oppose all sumptuary laws and the proposed prohibitory amendment to the Constitution in all its steps and stages as the most offensive form of sumptuary legislation."² Democrats argued that the amendment ran counter to "personal liberty" and:

. . . if carried out it must cause injustice and tyranny in its enforcement; and besides this it was directly contrary to one of the cardinal principles of the democratic party--that the government should interfere as little as possible with the private affairs, business, and habits of the citizens.³

Democrats agreed with anti-prohibitionists that the amendment would destroy capital, property, and farm markets and

¹Register, May 2, 1882.

²Ibid., June 17, 1881.

³(Des Moines) Iowa State Leader, May 4, 1882 [herein-after referred to as Leader].

probably not curtail saloons, but merely require increased importation of illegal foreign beers and liquors into the state.¹

As prohibitionist strength began to build in the state, the Democrats moved slightly away from their overt opposition. F. W. Lehman at the Polk County Democratic Convention in 1881 explained that Democrats would be politic to abandon unrestrained opposition to the amendment:

The republicans are to have the credit of submitting it, and we are expected to take the responsibility of defeating it. They hope to stab this amendment in the dark of a special election, and drag the corpse to the door of the democratic party, and charge it with the murder.²

J. M. Walker from Polk county and Democratic candidate for Lieutenant Governor in 1881 outlined the Democratic strategy to prevent the Republicans from making the Democrats a scapegoat. He proposed that the Democrats should openly oppose the amendment and fight for its defeat during the state elections in the autumn of 1881, and, if the Democrats were to capture the legislature, they would defeat the amendment; however, if Republicans retained control of the general assembly, the Democratic party was to consider it to be a popular mandate for the amendment and cool its vehement

¹Dubuque Herald, June 18, 1882.

²Register, August 28, 1881.

opposition.¹ The editor of a major Democratic organ in the spring of 1882 expressed the matured Democratic position on prohibition when he wrote:

Individual democrats may do as they please, and will work and vote free from all party allegiance. Plenty of them will work and vote to carry the amendment, and are glad to be absolved from party ties. Others will probably fight with the liquor men, while still others will sit on the fence and hold the coats of the fighters. But as a party the democrats of Iowa will not touch the question. The party is on record against the amendment and fought hard against it at a time when the very liquor men who are now squealing so hard were in the ranks of republicanism throwing up their hats and shouting and voting for . . . prohibitionists. . . .²

Despite their caution, nineteen of the twenty-two Democrats in the House of Representatives of the Nineteenth General Assembly voted against the amendment, two abstained from voting and only one, from a rural prohibitionist county, voted for it.³

Democrats readily charged the Republican party with sponsoring prohibition and condemned Republicans who tried to adopt a moderate stance on the amendment. The Iowa State Leader reported: "The republican party fathered the amendment and the Register suckled it."⁴ Concurrently, the Demo-

¹ Ibid., September 13, 1881.

² Leader, April 4, 1882.

³ Reid, loc. cit.; Journal of the House of the Nineteenth General Assembly, loc. cit.

⁴ Leader, April 4, 1882.

cratic Keokuk Constitution condemned Lee county Republicans for not enthusiastically endorsing the unpopular amendment in that county: "The republicans let principle go to the dogs; they were after offices."¹ Likewise, when the amendment was adopted at the 1882 referendum, the Democratic newspapers reported: "The Republican Amendment to Constitution Carried."²

Republicans spurned Democratic charges that they as a party endorsed the amendment because Republican leaders considered it too dangerous an issue to advocate. United States Senator William Boyd Allison described the amendment as a "hot potato" for politicians and was unwilling to express his opinion until he had assessed the general drift of the state voters on prohibition.³ Republican aspirant Jonathan Prentiss Dolliver of Fort Dodge was reluctant to speak for the amendment in 1881 and responded to a question about his political activities during the amendment campaign by stating that he would probably travel in Europe. Later he half-heartedly supported the amendment after analyzing the

¹ Keokuk Constitution, November 2, 1881.

² Burlington Gazette, June 28, 1882.

³ Leland L. Sage, William Boyd Allison: A Study in Practical Politics (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1956), pp. 184-85.

beliefs of his north-central Iowa constituents.¹

The Republican party officially adopted a position which neither overtly supported nor rejected the amendment, rationalizing that such support would throw the amendment into a political arena which would divide the party and not add votes to the prohibition issue. The editor of the powerful Republican organ, the Iowa State Register, wrote:

No friend of temperance can and no advocate of license ought to object to giving the voters of the State an opportunity to vote upon a proposed amendment to our Constitution and then leave it to the people, independent of political parties to accept or reject, according to the will of the majority.²

Newly-elected Governor Buren Sherman espoused a similar view in his inaugural address in January 1882: "Responsibility rests with the citizen in his individual capacity, untrammelled by party pledge, uninfluenced by party considerations. . . ."³ Republican leaders immodestly declared that their support of submission of the amendment to the voters involved idealistic and altruistic political principles, especially "the right of the people to self-government, and the right to control the making of their own laws."⁴

Unfortunately, Republican fence-sitters in counties

¹Thomas Richard Ross, Jonathan Prentiss Dolliver: A Study in Political Integrity and Independence (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1958), pp. 48-49.

²Register, February 12, 1881.

³Ibid., January 13, 1882.

⁴Ibid., April 18, 1882.

which had electorates that were Democratic or generally hostile to prohibition found the official Republican position tainted and impractical. As a result, river county Republican parties were split and Democrats made conspicuous gains.

The Republicans in Des Moines county soon after the official declaration of submission of the amendment by the state party suffered internal dissension sponsored in part by German Republicans. Led by Theodore Guelick, who later founded the State Anti-Amendment Club of Iowa, German Republicans in the summer of 1881 pressured the county party to make refutation of the amendment the major qualification for Republican local and state candidates. County Republican leaders refused such a test for candidates, declaring that prohibition was a personal matter without political implications.¹ At the county Republican convention, boycotted by the Germans, the party tabled resolutions both to support and condemn the seventh plank of the state platform which called for submission of the amendment.²

Prohibitionist dissension resulted in Des Moines county Republicans losing local elections in October. The Republican newspaper, the Burlington Hawkeye, attributed the loss to both disgruntled prohibitionist Republicans who felt the county party had not openly supported the amendment and

¹ Burlington Gazette, July 13, 1881.

² Ibid., September 3, 1881.

anti-prohibitionist Republicans who believed the local ticket was too strongly committed to temperance.¹ Republican cleavages grew after the election as the local Democratic newspaper dutifully reprinted statements by both prohibitionist and anti-prohibitionist Republicans defending their behavior during the local elections and condemning the actions of county leaders. The Democrats gleefully reported: "Verily the republican party managers in this county have succeeded in getting between two fires, and it is no wonder the Hawkeye cries out lustily, Save us or we perish."²

Scott county republicans experienced similar disjunctions in their organization. Early in the autumn, 1881, Scott county Republican leaders tried to avoid repetition of the German-Republican bolt which had occurred in Des Moines county. Republicans at a county convention adopted a resolution "that the Republicans of Scott county do hereby repudiate the seventh plank of the republican state platform as not binding."³ Three weeks later prohibitionist Republicans labeling themselves as "Independent Republicans" organized in the county to support an alternate county slate

¹ Burlington Hawkeye, October 13, 1881.

² Burlington Gazette, October 5, 1881.

³ Davenport Gazette, September 2, 1881.

of temperance Republicans.¹ As a result, the Democrats carried the county by four hundred votes. The Republican party managers attributed the loss to "professed republicans who worked for democrats" and "the folly of the Prohibition agitation."²

Iowa Republicans found themselves in a dilemma. While unwilling to openly support the amendment because it alienated Republican voters along the rivers and in cities, they discovered after the referendum that temperance support tended to be congruent with grass-roots sources of Republicanism. The data in Table VII reveals the political composition of prohibitionist, mean, and anti-prohibitionist counties. The data most demonstrating party-votes rather than personality-votes are the statistics for candidates running for the offices of secretary of state and United States representative. Buren Sherman, Republican gubernatorial candidate, was personally more attractive to voters than the Greenback or Democratic candidates; however, the votes for secretary of state and representative in Congress, conducted a year later, revealed the strong Republican composition of prohibitionist counties, and the Democratic or tri-partisan character of counties with smaller prohibitionist votes.

¹Ibid., September 21, 1881.

²Ibid., October 12, 1881.

TABLE VII
PARTY DISTRIBUTION IN SELECTED COUNTIES BASED ON DEGREE OF SUPPORT OF
PROHIBITION AMENDMENT

ELECTIONS	Prohibitionist ¹			Mean Counties ²			Anti-Prohib. ³		
	Rep.	Dem.	Grbk.	Rep.	Dem.	Grbk.	Rep.	Dem.	Grbk.
Governor (1881)	73.2%	15.6%	10.6%	57.5%	28.4%	12.7%	47.1%	48.7%	3.9%
Sec. of State	66.3	20.2	12.2	47.1	38.8	9.9	39.4	56.5	3.8
Rep. in Congress	64.0	30.0	6.0	50.7	28.8	16.8	41.8	49.5	8.4

¹The ten counties voting most strongly for the prohibition amendment were Emmet, Winnebago, Dickinson, Clarke, Story, Cherokee, Buena Vista, Appanoose, Ringgold, and Calhoun.

²The ten counties clustering about the state mean vote for the amendment (55.3%) were Marion, Grundy, Washington, Chickasaw, Harrison, Webster, Decatur, Kossuth, Shelby, and Benton.

³The ten counties voting most strongly against the amendment were Dubuque, Scott, Des Moines County, Wapello, Clayton, Plymouth, Allamakee, Lee, Johnson and Jackson.

SOURCE: Frank D. Jackson, Secretary of State, Census of Iowa for the Year 1885 (Des Moines: George E. Roberts, State Printer, 1885), pp. 611-59.

Republican leaders did not neglect their lessons. Within days after the referendum, the Republican Ottumwa Courier shifted its editorial policy from a condemnation of the amendment as the work of impractical visionaries to a complacent tone that prohibition should be supported because it represented the will of the voters.¹ The overturn of the amendment by the state Supreme Court further intensified prohibitionist feelings and influenced Republican policy decisions. By 1883, it was apparent that prohibitionists had captured the Republican party. At the party convention, Republicans adopted a platform which included a plank supporting additional prohibition legislation. A few traditional party leaders also gave the prohibitionists aid; Senator Allison was particularly crucial in convincing Republican anti-prohibitionists not to challenge the temperance Republican slate in order to unify the party.² Thus, after 1883, despite the continued pressures from river-county and some interior urban Republicans, the party was overtly sponsoring legislation which by 1890 prohibited the manufacture, sale, and consumption of all alcoholic beverages in the state.

The readiness with which the Republican party adopted prohibition was symptomatic of the eventual failure of the

¹ Ottumwa Daily Courier, June - July 1882.

² Sage, op. cit., pp. 188-90.

nineteenth century phase of Iowa prohibitionism. For just as expediently as Republican leaders supported prohibition to gain votes, they discarded it during the 1890s when temperance proved to be a political embarrassment. By 1893 Iowa Republicans had learned that prohibitionist sources of power were diminishing, while counter-sources alienated by the prohibitionist posture of the party were growing and spreading into the interior of the state. An early historian of Iowa temperance estimated that by the late 1880s over one-half of the counties were openly disobeying the prohibition laws.¹ Meanwhile, in previously secure Republican and prohibitionist areas, dissension was disrupting the party organization. Particularly critical was a split in the Polk county Republican party during the 1887 state elections which resulted in one anti-prohibitionist "Independent Republican" being elected to the general assembly. Prohibitionist inadequacies as a power base were reinforced when Democrats captured the governorship for two successive terms largely due to anti-prohibitionist campaigns in 1889 and 1891. In the mid-nineties, Republican leaders officially disavowed prohibition and sponsored passage of the Muley law which in effect allowed local licensing of saloons.²

¹ Dan Elbert Clark, "The History of Liquor Legislation in Iowa 1878-1908," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, VI (October, 1908), 607.

² Ibid., pp. 581-82, 587-88.

The ultimate failure of nineteenth century traditional prohibition was inherent in its power base. The Iowa prohibition movement of the 1870s and 1880s did not reflect the interaction of elements and strategies which eventually over-took the nation during World War I, but was rooted in ante-bellum temperance reform and reflected the culmination of over one-half century of a traditional dry animus in the United States. Traditional prohibition had as its source of power a blend of pietist Protestantism with rural nativist values. Temperance pressure groups operated as catalysts within the fertile prohibition environment in order to coalesce and activate dry sources into functional political powers which forced legislatures to enact anti-liquor laws. However, the course of nineteenth century society was being dynamically remolded by industrialism, urbanization, and relatively unrestricted immigration. These forces enlarged and dispersed environments which had traditionally opposed prohibition. Economically complex and heterogeneously populated cities began to exert pressures which counteracted traditional sources of prohibition strength.

From 1885 to 1895 the Iowa population grew by 17 per cent; the largest growth was in prohibitionist counties (47.6%) and mean counties (18.2%), with anti-prohibitionist counties expanding at a slower rate than the state average

(12.5%).¹ The rural character of the state was also altering. The Iowa census of 1895 estimated that 42 per cent of all Iowans lived in towns with populations greater than one thousand persons.² Such growth rates tended to counter the 5 per cent margin of victory which prohibitionists had claimed thirteen years earlier.

Prohibitionist sources required, therefore, a new temperance thrust after 1900 to activate urban elements and correlate them with traditional temperance sources in order to create a coalition with sufficient power to influence a renewal of state dry laws and eventually passage of national prohibition. This was actualized in the pragmatic politics, superior organization, propaganda machinery, and anti-ideological quality of the Anti-Saloon League and the growing reformist psyche of the American middle class during the progressive era.³ The sources of traditional Iowa prohibitionism, while previously paramount as agents of dry strength in the 1880s, could only be part of the new crusade opening the twentieth century.

¹ W. M. McFarland, Secretary of State, Census of Iowa for the Year 1895 (Des Moines: F. R. Conaway, State Printer, 1896), pp. 262-64.

² Ibid., p. 278.

³ James H. Timberlake, Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 125-48.

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